

THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS

PRESS INFORMATION
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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

Sheriff Ed Earl (**BURT REYNOLDS**) and Miss Mona (**DOLLY PARTON**) share a most unique relationship.

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May 18, 1982

"THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS"

(Production Notes)

Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton star in the new musical-comedy, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas."

A Universal/Sunburst Presentation of A Miller-Milkis-Boyett Production of A Colin Higgins Film, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas" also stars Dom DeLuise, Charles Durning and Jim Nabors. It also spotlights a large supporting cast of singers and dancers.

The motion picture was directed by Colin Higgins and produced by Thomas L. Miller, Edward K. Milkis and Robert L. Boyett. The screenplay was by Larry L. King & Peter Masterson and Colin Higgins, based on the stageplay written by Larry L. King and Peter Masterson. Music and lyrics were by Carol Hall, with additional songs by Dolly Parton.

A Universal-RKO Picture, Stephanie Phillips was executive producer, and the co-producer was Peter Macgregor-Scott.

"The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas" marks the first professional teaming for perennial favorites Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton. He is cast as Ed Earl Dodd, the beleaguered Sheriff of a tradition-bound Texas county where the easy life is enflamed by a statewide searchlight that spells trouble.

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She plays the celebrated Miss Mona, whose fabled establishment, discreetly known as the Chicken Ranch, is the area's number-one tradition. It is also the cause of the sudden notoriety that befalls quiet Lanville County.

Actually, the Chicken Ranch isn't the real culprit. It, like a lot of things (including an undercover friendship between Sheriff Ed Earl and Miss Mona), had been running on an even keel for quite a spell. The real problem is an outsider named Melvin P. Thorpe. Played by a singing-dancing Dom DeLuise, Thorpe is the self-appointed Watchdog Of Texas, a crusading TV consumer advocate whose latest target is the Chicken Ranch.

Jim Nabors, in his motion picture debut, is cast as Ed Earl's affable Deputy Sheriff.

Charles Durning is The Governor, an accomplished political sidestepper pressured to resolve a very touchy controversy about an equally touchy business.

The controversy comes to a pyrotechnic head when The State Senator adheres to a time-honored tradition and treats a winning college football team to a night's entertainment at The Chicken Ranch. Robert Mandan plays the sordid but self-righteous Senator.

Lois Nettleton portrays Dulcie Mae, proprietress of the courthouse square cafe and the Sheriff's respectable lady friend. Theresa Merritt is Jewel, Miss Mona's right hand out at the Chicken Ranch. Noah Beery is Edsel, editor of the Gilbert, Texas, newspaper. Raleigh Bond is the Mayor of Gilbert; Barry Corbin is a leading businessman named C. J.; Mary Jo Catlett is

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Rita, who runs the Sheriff's office; and Mary Louise Wilson appears as Modene, the town's chronic complainer.

Television newsbroadcaster and journalist Howard K. Smith appears as himself.

William A. Fraker, A.S.C., was director of photography, and Robert F. Boyle was production designer. The film was edited by Pembroke J. Herring, David Bretherton, Jack Hofstra and Nicholas Eliopolous. Theadora Van Runkle designed the costumes, and Tony Stevens was choreographer. Background music is by Patrick Williams and the movie's music was produced by Gregg Perry.

Helping bring the music to life are 15 versatile actress-singer-dancers who serve as Miss Mona's stable of "talent." Andrea Pike plays Shy, the new girl in the house, and the others are Gail Benedict, Valerie Leigh Bixler, Lorraine Fields, Trish Garland, Carol Culver, Lily Mariye, Jennifer Narin Smith, Terry Treas, Melanie Winter, Lee Lund, Sandi Johnson, Terrie Robinson, Paula Lynn and Leslie Cook.

The Aggies, winners of an annual football grudge match, are played by 22 dancing actors, Stephen Bray, Brian Bullard, Jeff Calhoun, Gary Chapman, John Dolf, David Engel, Ed Forsyth, Mark Fotopoulos, Michael Fullington, David Warren Gigson, Joseph Hart, Jeffrey Hornaday, Patrick Maguire, Ted Marriott, Jerry Mitchell, Steven Moore, Douglas Robb, Kevin Ryan, Tim Topper, Marvin Tunney, Randy Van Cupp and Robert Warners.

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If Melvin P. Thorpe stands behind his word, then it is The Dogettes who stand behind Melvin Thorpe. Benjamin Taylor, Larry Kenton, Edie Lehmann, Mark McGee, Arnetia Walker, Robin Lynn Funk, Karen McLain and Ty Whitney are the Dogettes, an alter-ego backup ensemble that raises its voice when Thorpe raises hell.

"The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas" was filmed on location in Texas and at Universal Studios in Universal City, California. According to the Texas Film Commission, the movie is the first picture ever granted permission to film inside the historic Capitol Building in Austin. The exterior of the old Greek Revival Governor's Mansion was also utilized. Elsewhere in the Lone Star State, the Lavaca County Courthouse in Hallettsville, dedicated in 1897, served as the mythical Lanville County Courthouse in fictional Gilbert, Texas. A turn-of-the-century farmhouse near Pflugerville was selected to serve as the exterior of the Chicken Ranch. The outside of the large structure was duplicated on a Universal sound stage. It housed a functional interior used for all scenes taking place in Miss Mona's establishment.

THE CAST

According to a new book written on BURT REYNOLDS by Nancy Streebeck titled The Films Of Burt Reynolds (Citadel Press),

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"The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas" is the 35th motion picture of Reynolds' career. He has directed three of them, "Gator," "The End" and, most recently, the very successful "Sharky's Machine."

A scholarship student at The Hyde Park Playhouse in New York State, Reynolds' professional debut was on the New York stage in a revival of Mister Roberts. The road led to Hollywood and comprehensive training in four television series, "Riverboat," "Gunsmoke," "Hawk" and "Dan August." His part in the acclaimed 1972 motion picture "Deliverance" marked a strong turning point in his career. Since then, he has starred in some of the top money-makers in Hollywood history and repeatedly received number-one honors in all the popularity polls.

With all his success, Reynolds has continued to take professional chances and demonstrate his versatility. His motion picture credits are as follows: "Angel Baby," "Armored Command," "Operation C.I.A." "Navajo Joe," "Shark," "Fade In," "Impasse," "Sam Whiskey," "100 Rifles," "Skullduggery," "Fuzz," "Deliverance," "Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Sex," "Shamus," "White Lightning," "The Man Who Loved Cat Dancing," "The Longest Yard," "W.W. And The Dixie Dancekings," "At Long Last Love," "Hustle," "Lucky Lady," "Gator," "Silent Movie," "Nickelodeon," "Smokey And The Bandit," "Semi-Tough," "The End," "Hooper," "Starting Over," "Rough Cut," "Smokey And The Bandit II," "The Cannonball Run," "Paternity," "Sharky's Machine," and now "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas."

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Having begun his career on the stage, Reynolds returns to the theatre at every opportunity. At The Burt Reynolds Dinner Theatre in Florida, he directed and starred in The Rainmaker, directed Martin Sheen in Two For The Seesaw and, very recently, in One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest, and played opposite Carol Burnett in Same Time, Next Year. His theatrical credits include a most successful production of The Rainmaker in Chicago in 1972 with Lois Nettleton, his lady friend in "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," and the Jose Quintero-directed Broadway play, Look, We've Come Through. In addition to The Burt Reynolds Dinner Theatre in Jupiter, Florida, and the associated Foundation For Theatre Training for college students, he has made possible The Burt Reynolds Chair In Professional And Regional Theatre, one of the richest and most eminent theatre chairs in the nation.

Reynolds is next scheduled to star with Goldie Hawn in "Best Friends," a Norman Jewison film for Warner Bros.

Before she ever attempted an acting role, DOLLY PARTON was a top international star who had graduated from country music popularity to even broader musical horizons. However, her movie debut in Colin Higgins' 1980 film "Nine To Five" resulted in another big burst of acclaim for the inimitable entertainer.

Roundly praised for her performance, she received Golden Globe nominations as Best New Film Star and Best Supporting Actress. Additionally, the music she wrote for the hit movie enjoyed enormous success. The title tune "9 To 5" was voted the most performed country song of the year and was one of the top

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tunes heard on all popular radio stations. The album "9 To 5 And Odd Jobs" went platinum and the theme song was nominated for an Academy Award, Golden Globe and by the Academy Of Country Music. It won the People's Choice Award as Best Song.

Among Parton's million-plus selling LP's are "Here You Come Again," "Heartbreaker," "Great Balls Of Fire" and "Best Of Dolly Parton." Much of her original music reflects her poor Smokey Mountain heritage in East Tennessee, and the rich religious training she received.

The actress-singer-songwriter was honored with a Grammy as Female Vocalist, Country Single, in 1978; with a Country Music Association Award as 1978 Entertainer Of The Year; and by the CMA as Female Vocalist Of The Year in both 1975 and 1976, plus Vocal Duo Of The Year honors with Porter Waggoner for three years.

Following "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," which features four Dolly Parton songs, Parton plans to return to Las Vegas, where her debut proved her to be one of that entertainment spa's all-time top attractions. She also will appear on the concert stage in a series of shows across the nation.

DOM DELUISE earlier shared the screen with Burt Reynolds in the popular films "Silent Movie," "The End," "Smokey And The Bandit II" and "The Cannonball Run." DeLuise has acted in about 30 movies since his debut with Doris Day in the 1966 release "The Glass Bottom Boat." Among his picture credits are "Blazing Saddles," "Fail-Safe," "The Twelve Chairs," "The Cheap Detective,"

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"The Adventure Of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother," "The Muppet Movie," "Mel Brooks' History Of The World-Part I," "Fatso" and "Hot Stuff," which he also directed. His voice speaks for Jeremy The Crow in the forthcoming animated feature film "The Secret Of NIMH."

Trained as a stage actor, DeLuise scored early in his career in the Off-Broadway productions of Little Mary Sunshine, Half Past Wednesday and Another Evening With Harry Stoons. His Broadway work includes Last Of The Red Hot Lovers in 1969 and The Student Gypsy and Here's Love. As time allows, he continues to perform his club act in such spots as Las Vegas, New York, Atlantic City and San Francisco.

As a stage director, he guided Burt Reynolds and Carol Burnett in Same Time, Next Year at the Burt Reynolds Dinner Theatre early in 1980 and returned to the same theatre to direct Farrah Fawcett's well-received theatrical debut in Butterflies Are Free.

Television viewers first noticed DeLuise as a regular on The Garry Moore Show, then on The Entertainers and during eight years on The Dean Martin Show. He hosted The Dom DeLuise Variety Show on CBS-TV and starred as Stanley on the Lotsa Luck NBC series. His immediate schedule calls for him to serve as Bacchus XIV at the fabled New Orleans Mardi Gras in February of 1982.

Like Burt Reynolds, JIM NABORS not only plays a law enforcement officer in "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," but is actually the son of a Southern lawman. Nabors' career began

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when he turned a guest appearance on TV's top-rated Andy Griffith Show into a regular stint on the series as country boy Gomer Pyle. The Pyle character became so popular that soon a new series called Gomer Pyle USMC debuted and became an international favorite that was consistently at the very top of the ratings during its five years on the air. He subsequently hosted a variety show and a syndicated talk show, both of which bore his name.

Possessor of a singing voice far removed from the Gomer Pyle characterization, Nabors has recorded 28 albums and garnered five gold albums and one platinum LP for sales achievement. Now a resident of Hawaii, the entertainer stars regularly in a Polynesian Extravaganza show at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Dome, playing to capacity audiences since his opening in January of 1980.

His recent activities include starring in a special two-hour presentation of the "Love Boat" series on television and a 1981 TV Christmas special call "Jim Nabors' Christmas In Hawaii."

While filming "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," CHARLES DURNING was seen as Burt Reynolds' superior officer in "Sharky's Machine." The two also played brothers in "Starting Over." Durning's other movie credits include "The Sting," "The Front Page," "Dog Day Afternoon," "The Hindenburg," "Harry And Walter Go To New York," "An Enemy Of The People," "Twilight's Last Gleaming," "The Choirboys," "The Greek Tycoon" and "True Confessions."

Durning received an Emmy nomination for his acting in "Queen Of The Stardust Ballroom" and has starred in such network

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films as "Captains And The Kings," "The Trial Of Chaplain Jensen," "The Ashes Of Mrs. Reasoner," "The Rivalry" and "The Best Little Girl In The World." He starred in his own series in the mid-'70s, The Cop And The Kid and recently portrayed baseball legend Casey Stengel in the Public Broadcasting presentation of "Casey."

His New York stage work includes The Au Pair Man; Huui, Huui; The Happiness Cage; and Jules Feiffer's Knock Knock. He appeared in 22 productions for the New York Shakespeare Festival and also starred in the Pulitzer Prize-winning play That Championship Season.

ROBERT MANDAN has starred or co-starred regularly in seven television series. He is currently seen as Colonel Lawrence Fielding in Private Benjamin and previously was Chester on Soap. He also appeared on the primetime Caribe series, as well as the daytime TV dramas From These Roots, As The World Turns, The Edge Of Night and Search For Tomorrow.

Mandan acted on Broadway in There's A Girl In My Soup, Maggie Flynn and spent one year in the cast of Applause. His busy television schedule has previously allowed time for only two theatrical films, "Hickey And Boggs" and "The Carey Treatment." He recently starred in the TV movie "Return Of The Rebels."

In addition to the aforementioned revival of The Rainmaker in Chicago, LOIS NETTLETON's stage work includes God And Kate Murphy, for which she won the Clarence Derwent Award; the 1973 revival of A Streetcar Named Desire on Broadway, in which she

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was Blanche Dubois; They Knew What They Wanted, for which she earned a Tony nomination; and the Broadway production of Strangers in 1979. She has also appeared with the American Shakespeare Festival Company at Stratford.

In motion pictures, Nettleton won the Laurel Award for her part in "Period Of Adjustment." Among her other films are "Come Fly With Me," "Mail Order Bride," "Dirty Dingus Magee," "The Honkers," "The Good Guys And The Bad Guys," "The Man In The Glass Booth" and "Echoes Of A Summer."

In television, she won the Emmy award for her role as Susan B. Anthony in The American Woman: Portraits Of Courage. In 1977 she starred in the Norman Lear series All That Glitters, having earlier starred in the comedy series Accidental Family, for which she won the Hollywood Stars Of Tomorrow award. She also starred in the limited series "Washington: Behind Closed Doors" and "Centennial," and received Emmy nominations for The Last Bride Of Salem and Fear On Trial with George C. Scott.

THE SUPPORTING CAST

Principal among THERESA MERRITT's motion pictures since her screen debut in "They Might Be Giants" are "All That Jazz," "The Great Santini" and "The Wiz," in which she portrayed Auntie Em.

Following her Broadway debut in the original production of Carmen Jones, Merritt was seen in such Broadway shows as Division Street, Funny Girl, Show Boat, South Pacific, Golden Boy and The Wiz in which she played the Wicked Witch. She also

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starred in the New York production of The Amen Corner and toured Europe in the play. She starred in La Dispute at the National Theatre of Paris and did The Crucible at Lincoln Center.

In television, the former Emmy nominee starred for a season-and-a-half in the situation comedy series That's My Mama. Her TV credits include Sunshine Is On Its Way in 1980, Trumpets Of The Lord for Public Broadcasting and the award-winning J.T.

When time allows, she enjoys performing her one-artist show titled All About Miss Merritt. Following "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," she looks forward to recording her first album of gospel music.

NOAH BEERY, widely known for his long-running role as Joseph Rockford in The Rockford Files series, comes from a famous Hollywood film family and made his acting debut at age four in "The Mark Of Zorro" with Douglas Fairbanks. Following high school graduation, his career began in earnest when Universal signed him to a contract. His first important role was in "The Road Back," sequel to Universal's Academy Award-winning "All Quiet On The Western Front." His screen credits include "Of Mice And Men," "Sergeant York," "Cimarron Kid," "Red River," "Inherit The Wind," "Skin Game," "Little Fauss And Big Halsey" and "Walking Tall."

In addition to The Rockford Files, Beery has been a regular cast member on three other TV series, Circus Boy, Custer and Doc Elliot.

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BEHIND THE SCENES

For writer-director COLIN HIGGINS, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas" follows the enormous success of "Nine To Five," which he directed and co-wrote for stars Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin and Dolly Parton. His career was launched when his Masters Degree thesis at UCLA, a screenplay titled "Harold And Maude," was filmed and rapidly became a classic. In 1972 he wrote a script titled "The Devil's Daughter," which became an ABC Movie Of The Week. It was his first association with producers Thomas L. Miller and Edward K. Milkis, who were subsequently joined by Robert L. Boyett. Higgins' second screenplay to reach the theatrical screen, for the same producers, was "Silver Streak," another unqualified success starring Gene Wilder, Jill Clayburgh and Richard Pryor.

Higgins marked his motion picture directorial debut with yet another hit, Miller-Milkis-Boyett's "Foul Play," starring Goldie Hawn and Chevy Chase.

In addition to "Silver Streak" and "Foul Play," the MILLER-MILKIS-BOYETT production team has such major television involvements to its credit as Happy Days, Laverne And Shirley, Petrocelli, Bosom Buddies and Mork And Mindy.

Thomas L. Miller and Edward K. Milkis originally formed the company in 1972, producing television movies including "Night Of Terror," "The Heist" and "The Devil's Daughter," written by Colin Higgins. All three producers bring extensive and varied

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film experience to their partnership. Prior to joining forces, Miller was vice president of Paramount Television, in charge of program development, and Milkis was head of all post-production activities for Paramount Television. Just before joining the company, Robert L. Boyett was senior vice president, creative affairs, Paramount Television, responsible for all Paramount TV series, movies for TV, limited series and talent development.

In 1978, STEPHANIE PHILLIPS produced a new show on the New York stage with the catchy title The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas. The show became a runaway hit that earned seven Tony awards. The following year she produced the first national tour of the musical-comedy. She then produced the resident Houston company, which became the longest-running show in Texas history and subsequently toured the nation. It is currently enjoying an open-ended run at the Desert Inn in Las Vegas. Additionally, Ms. Phillips produced a "bus and truck" touring company of the play that has been on the road for over a year. She served as executive producer on the film inspired by the stage show.

Stephanie Phillips is President of Sunburst Productions, Inc. a motion picture company she formed after resigning as Senior Vice President of International Creative Management in 1973. In 1977, she was production executive on Universal's "Nunzio."

Co-Producer PETER MACGREGOR-SCOTT, who also served as production manager, marks his fifth successive Universal picture with "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." He was pro-

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duction manager on the highly successful "National Lampoon's Animal House," associate producer for "The Prisoner Of Zenda" and "Cheech And Chong's Next Movie" and associate producer for "The Jerk." He was trained in England, where the system enabled him to receive an education in all facets of filmmaking. He racked up 20 movie credits there, plus a great deal of television work and has 22 U.S. features to his credit.

WILLIAM A. FRAKER, A.S.C., was director of photography for "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," before which he photographed Burt Reynolds' "Sharky's Machine." He has earned Academy Award nominations for his cinematography on "Looking For Mr. Goodbar," "Heaven Can Wait," "Divine Madness" and "1941," which brought him an additional nomination for visual effects. His other work includes "Bullitt," "Day Of The Dolphin," "Paint Your Wagon," "The Fox" and "Rosemary's Baby." Fraker is also a motion picture director whose films are "Monte Walsh," "Reflections Of Fear" and "The Legend Of The Lone Ranger."

ROBERT F. BOYLE, a distinguished veteran of 40 years in the motion picture business, was production designer for the new Universal film. Trained at Universal, his work includes such films as "The Birds," "The Thrill Of It All," "Marnie," and, for other studios, "The Russians Are Coming, The Russians Are Coming," "How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying," "In Cold Blood" and "The Thomas Crown Affair." He was production designer for "Gaily, Gaily," "Fiddler On The Roof," "Portnoy's

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Complaint," "Mame," "Bite The Bullet," "The Shootist," "W.C. Fields And Me," "The Big Fix," "Private Benjamin" and "Looking To Get Out."

Three-time Academy Award nominee THEADORA VAN RUNKLE was awarded the creative challenge of designing the costumes for "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," which is her 20th feature. The Academy honored her with a nomination for her first movie, the trendsetting "Bonnie And Clyde," as well as for "The Godfather: Part II" and "New York, New York." She also designed for "Bullitt," "The Arrangement," "Mame," "I Love You Alice B. Toklas," "The Thomas Crown Affair," "Johnny Got His Gun," "S.O.B.," "Heaven Can Wait," "Heartbeeps," "The Jerk" and "Same Time, Next Year."

TONY STEVENS, who choreographed Dolly Parton's S.R.O. Las Vegas show and directed Godspell at the Burt Reynolds Dinner Theatre in Jupiter, Florida, created the dances for "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." He earlier staged the elaborate party scenes for "The Great Gatsby," choreographed the Mary Tyler Moore Comedy Hour and did TV specials for Moore and Cheryl Ladd. His long list of credits also includes the catchy television commercial campaign for the soft drink Dr. Pepper.

* * *



May 18, 1982

DOLLY PARTON

"THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS"

To the world-at-large, Dolly Parton, with her outrageous fashions, her golden gossamer wigs, her sparkling jewelry and her lively wit, has always created a larger-than-life image, wherever and whenever she has performed. Her music, concerts and film debut in the hit comedy, "Nine To Five," have all contributed to making Dolly an internationally known entertainer.

When the role of Miss Mona in Universal-RKO's "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas" was offered, the character of the Madam and owner of the legendary Chicken Ranch seemed to be a natural one for Dolly, and being teamed with Burt Reynolds made it an offer she couldn't refuse. Little did Dolly know that at the same time she was insisting on Reynolds playing Sheriff Earl Ed, Burt was agreeing to the film only if Dolly Parton would play Miss Mona. Another dream come true.

But as a child growing up in the Smokey Mountains of East Tennessee, Dolly Parton had lots of dreams. Her world of "make-believe" was filled with bright lights, far-away places, fancy clothes and all the good things which come with being a big star.

This dream of being a super-star became her goal, and she began working hard to make it come true. To Dolly, the fourth

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of twelve children, working hard was no novelty; but even though her family didn't have much money, they did have all the things which are important in life: lots of love for each other, a rich spiritual life, and a home filled with music and pride. While just a little girl, Dolly was already writing songs and simple-fun-filled stories, which she brought to life with her singing.

She had always planned on moving to Nashville as soon as she finished high school. Once there, Dolly set out delivering her songs to producers, publishers and record companies, sometimes accompanying herself on the guitar and when she could afford it, on recorded demos.

In the early days, she teamed with Porter Wagoner and toured, recorded and appeared on television with him. Her eye-catching wardrobe and flashy appearance always got her the first attention, but it was her unusual vocal-style and heart-warming songs that won her fans wherever she went. Dolly had found a home in country music.

In accomplishing all her dreams and goals, Dolly has always felt that her success was due to her positive attitude in life. She enjoyed new challenges, and so even though she had made her mark in country music, she wanted to take her talents and her music and to sing to the rest of the world as well. In order to do this, she knew that she had to make some changes. So in 1974, Dolly ended her partnership with Porter and signed with Katz-Gallin-Morey, a Los Angeles based management company, to

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help her expand her horizons. Some people raised their eyebrows, but as Dolly always maintained, "I'm not leaving country, I am just taking it with me."

The RCA albums which followed struck gold and platinum: Here You Come Again went platinum, along with the title single; Heartbreaker went gold; and so did Great Balls Of Fire, and a previous favorite, Best Of Dolly Parton.

These LPs all blazed a trail of crossover acceptance culminating last year with her album 9 To 5 And Other Odd Jobs, which went platinum with the platinum single "9 To 5" going to number one on the national pop and AOR charts, as well as the country charts. Additionally, the song was nominated for an Oscar and won the 1981 People's Choice Award. Dolly also won two Grammys for "9 To 5" as Best Country Song and for Best Country Vocal Performance (Female), at this year's Grammy awards ceremony.

"9 To 5" is not only an award-winning hit song, it is also the title of the film which marked Dolly's debut into the world of movie-making. Starring with Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin, as three secretaries who finally turn the tables on a tyrannical boss, Dolly Parton won accolades from the critics and new fans around the world. The film, one of the smash comedy hits of the year, was just one more goal accomplished by the ever-artistically-restless Dolly.

That year also marked Dolly's debut in Las Vegas at the Riviera Hotel, which long-time Vegas veterans have called the

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biggest event in decades. The dazzling Dolly not only wowed the fans with her own songs, but also delivered a show-stopping rendition of Elvis Presley's classic "All Shook Up," complete with swivelling hips and curling lips, which brought the house down!

This summer, Universal-RKO's "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," co-starring Dolly and Burt will be released. The movie was inspired by the smash Broadway musical of the same name. For the film and soundtrack album, Dolly Parton has also written some original songs.

No matter what other areas of entertainment Dolly decides to conquer, songwriting will always top the list. Her music has not only captivated her fans but an endless list of other artists as well, who have successfully performed and recorded her material. Emmylou Harris once said about Dolly's "To Daddy" (which Emmylou recorded), "To me, it's like an O. Henry story. Dolly sets you up and then whammo... she turns it all around. When I first heard it, my lips were trembling... and I was afraid I was gonna make a scene."

With the completion of filming of "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," Dolly will be returning to touring and live performing, which has always been dear to her heart. "Nothing beats getting out on the stage and singing direct to my fans, the people who've been my friends all through the years, as well as some of the new friends I've made along the way," says Dolly.

In addition to this year's Grammy awards; Dolly has been honored by a Grammy (Female Vocalist Country Single/1978);

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Country Music Association Awards as Entertainer of the Year (1978); Female Vocalist of the Year (1975/1976); Vocal Duo of the Year with Porter Wagoner (1968/1970/1971); as well as the aforementioned Oscar nomination, Golden Globes nomination (Best Song, Best New Film Star, Best Supporting Actress); and honors from the music industry magazines, Cashbox, Record World and Billboard.

Heartbreak Express is the latest of Dolly's albums, which she also co-produced, in addition to writing eight of the ten songs.

To Dolly though it's all just the beginning. As she says, "Everybody wants to be successful at whatever their inner dream is. I'm not near finished with what I want to do, with what I want to accomplish yet. I want to be somebody that left something good for somebody else to enjoy."

Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton star in A Universal/Sunburst Presentation of A Miller-Milkis-Boyett Production of A Colin Higgins Film, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." Starring Dom DeLuise, Charles Durning and Jim Nabors, it was directed by Colin Higgins and produced by Thomas L. Miller, Edward K. Milkis and Robert L. Boyett. The screenplay was by Larry L. King & Peter Masterson and Colin Higgins, based on the stageplay written by Larry L. King and Peter Masterson. Music and lyrics were by Carol Hall, with additional songs by Dolly Parton. A Universal-RKO Picture, Stephanie Phillips was executive producer, and the co-producer was Peter Macgregor-Scott.



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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
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It may be the best little whorehouse in Texas to others, but to Miss Mona (**DOLLY PARTON**) it's just "A Little Bitty Pissant Country Place."

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

Miss Mona's (DOLLY PARTON) relationship with the sheriff opens up a whore-net's nest of problems.

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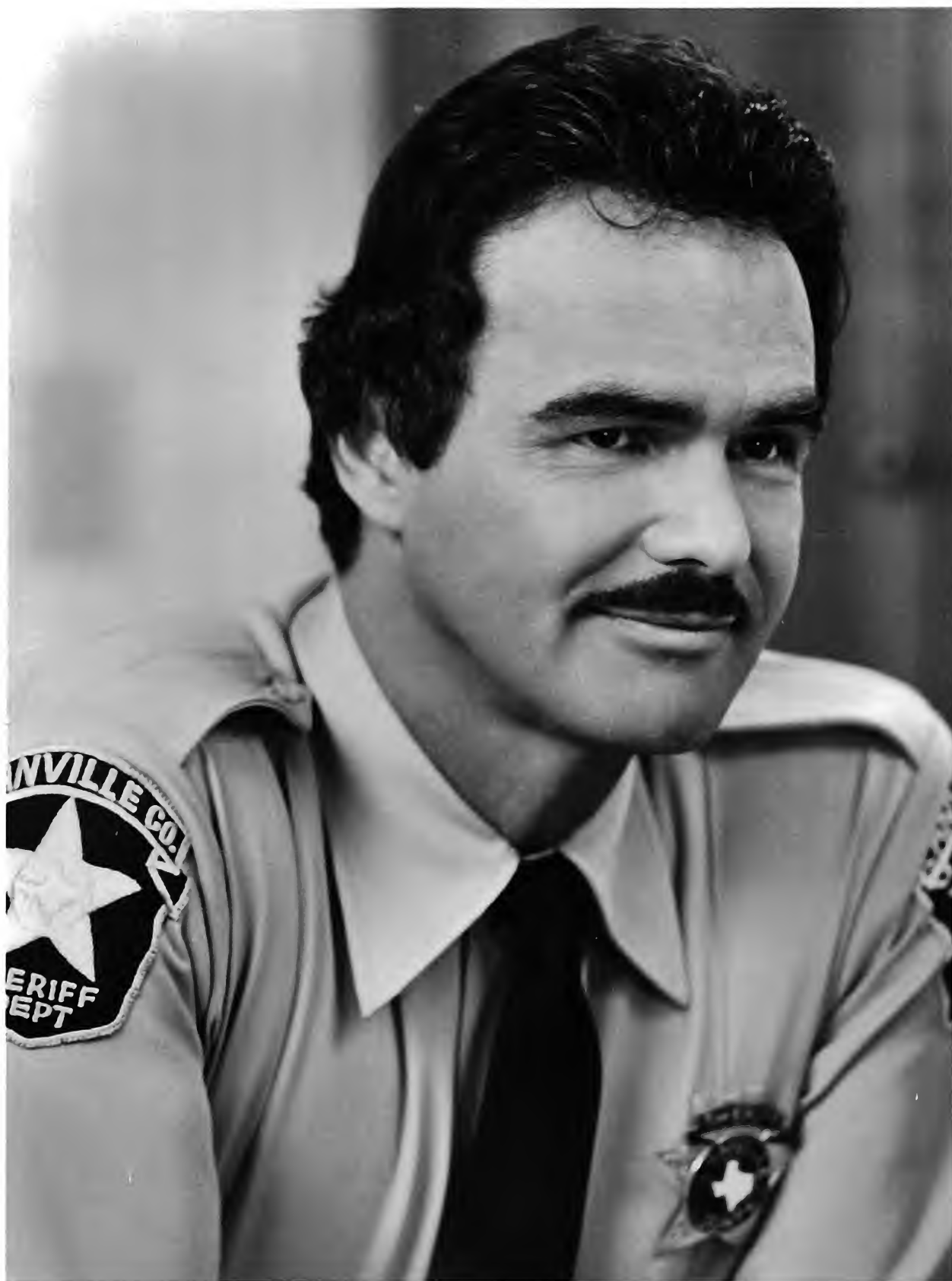


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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
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Before long, Sheriff Ed Earl's (BURT REYNOLDS) relaxing life will become the center of statewide interest.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

Ed Earl Dodd (**BURT REYNOLDS**) is a small-town sheriff with a big-time problem.

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May 18, 1982

BURT REYNOLDS

"THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS"

When the show business institution, The Friar's Club, selected its 1981 Entertainer Of The Year, Frank Sinatra wrote, "In honoring Burt Reynolds, we pay tribute to Everyman. Burt's that kind of guy. He is the one the ladies like to dance with and their husbands like to drink with. He is the larger than life actor of our times. He is gifted, talented, naughty and nice."

Many of Sinatra's words apply to the character Burt Reynolds plays in his current and 35th film, Universal-RKO's "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." With Dolly Parton playing the colorful Miss Mona in the musical comedy, Reynolds portrays Sheriff Ed Earl Dodd, chief law enforcer in a rural Texas county with a big reputation inspired by its notorious Chicken Ranch establishment. Sheriff Ed Earl is a good man whose simple life becomes enormously complicated when a statewide spotlight focuses on his jurisdiction.

Reynolds sings a duet in the movie with Parton. She wrote the song especially for the film, as well as other additional musical material. The motion picture is based on the hit Broadway production, The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas.

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The past decade has been one of unusual achievement for Reynolds, with honors and awards too numerous to fully detail. He is currently into his almost-unprecedented fifth year at the top of the boxoffice popularity polls; the National Association Of Theatre Owners (NATO) has judged him Male Star Of The Year several times; and the American Movie Awards television special honored him as World Favorite Actor.

Shortly after completing "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," he was honored for the fifth consecutive year by the People's Choice Awards; in 1982, he was named Favorite Motion Picture Actor and Favorite All-Round Male Entertainer.

In addition to being named the Friar's Club 1981 Entertainer Of The Year, the actor-director was also selected last year as Variety Club International Entertainer Of The Year. The televised event generated resources that launched the Burt Reynolds Heart Center at the Eagleston Hospital for Children in Atlanta, Georgia. The Atlanta Variety Club had earlier named him its Man Of The Year.

"I can't speak for others in my profession, but I never tire of winning recognition," he confesses. "Each one is very special. I know it's chic to put them in a closet when the newness wears off. I guess the difference is that for me the newness never wears off." One room of his Holmby Hills, California, Spanish-style home displays every show business award he has ever received.

Certain honors seem particularly meaningful to Reynolds. He was unusually touched when a survey published in the March 1980 issue of Seventeen Magazine revealed that teenage girls

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placed him number one on their list of "fantasy fathers." Also, national surveys conducted in both 1981 and 1982 for the World Almanac And Book Of Facts among junior high school age students placed Reynolds at the very top of the list of "famous or important living persons you most admire. In other words, who is your number one hero?"

Commenting on the "fantasy father" recognition, he said, "I'd like to think the girls sensed I would be a fair, fun, wonderful dad, but they probably just thought I'd provide a big allowance."

On April 30, 1980, at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), Burt Reynolds was honored with the second annual Charles Chaplin Award For Film Excellence for his "contributions to the art of filmmaking."

Growing up in Florida, popular student athlete "Buddy" Reynolds seemed a long shot for superstardom. By his own admission, he would have both laughed and scoffed at the prospect of a career in the arts.

Burton Leon Reynolds was born February 11, in Waycross, Georgia, to Mr. and Mrs. Burt Reynolds, Sr. "The name Burton has been in our family for decades," explains the elder Reynolds, son of a forestry teacher and a full-blooded Cherokee woman who met and married on an Indian reservation. The star's mother, Fern, worked as a registered nurse and ran a small general store while her husband was a law enforcement officer ultimately serving as a chief of police near Palm Beach, Florida.

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Burt, Jr., his sister Nancy and brother Jimmy grew up in South Florida. Burt remembers, "I was kind of restless as a kid, and I got into my share of trouble. Part of it was probably a reaction to my father's position of authority in the community. Away from sports, I was kind of shy. But I also had a streak of rebellion in me. I ran away from home when I was pretty young."

He landed in the Allendale, South Carolina, jail. "I told the authorities I was an orphan. I didn't want my folks to know I was a prisoner. I wanted them to think I was having a great time." He served a week, working in farm fields by day and sleeping in a tiny cell at night. Allendale is planning to place a plaque that reads, "Burt Reynolds Slept Here."

"After that, the thing that kept my feet on the ground was athletics, especially football. It was the only way I had discovered at that early age to express myself."

A high school football star, he was being considered for a West Point appointment, an effort spearheaded by his father. Reynolds, Sr. recollects, "But there weren't any girls at West Point in those days, so Bud decided on Florida State University."

At FSU, in Tallahassee, Reynolds earned acceptable grades and played football for the Seminoles, being named All-Florida and All-Southern Conference running halfback. Fired with a decision to make a career of professional ball, he was being scouted by the Baltimore Colts and Detroit Lions when a serious automobile accident on Christmas Eve wrecked his knees and his dreams.

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Discouraged, he left college and drifted to New York for a brief period. He remembers that the abundance of James Dean and Marlon Brando clones was so alarming that he soon returned to the relative calm of South Florida. "I didn't care for any of the actors I encountered. I thought they were plain silly," he says.

Enrolling at Palm Beach Junior College, his interest in the arts was initially stimulated by Watson B. Duncan, III, his English literature teacher who was also the institution's drama instructor. Reynolds insists, "Dr. Duncan laid the foundation for whatever I have accomplished. He awakened my mind. Amazingly, he made English Lit the most exciting subject of my life. I sat in the front row, enthralled. One day he informed me I was going to be in his next play. I told him, 'You're a nice man, but you're crazy!' He didn't apply any pressure, but the next day I arrived just as the auditions ended. He was there alone. He handed me a script and I managed to mumble a few words and he told me I had the role.

"He saw a part of me that even I didn't recognize. He understood that I was lost without the ability to play ball. He knew I needed an outlet. He didn't think of me as a jock, and for that I will be eternally grateful. That's why I'm always trying to turn athletes into actors. I know what they go through. I hate stereotyping, whether with professions, races or sex. It is so destructive."

Burt Reynolds' debut performance as the alcoholic Tom Prior in the Palm Beach Junior College production of Outward Bound

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won him the Florida Drama Desk Award as Best Actor and resulted in a scholarship to the Hyde Park Playhouse in New York State. There, he acted with Jocelyn Brando in Bus Stop, Turhan Bey and Gloria Vanderbilt in The Spa, Sylvia Sidney in Anniversary Waltz, and Shepperd Strudwick in Affairs Of State.

Playhouse visitor Joanne Woodward is credited with furthering his career. "I can't imagine what she saw in me at the time, but she made a few calls and helped secure my first agent."

The young hopeful's professional debut was with Charlton Heston in a 1956 revival of Mr. Roberts directed by John Forsythe at New York City Center Theatre. To support himself, he worked as a dockhand, a bouncer at Roseland, body guard and dishwasher. His live TV debut consisted of flying through a glass window for a Sunday religious program. His first real acting job was in an episode of the popular M Squad series. According to the story, he got the role because, when asked for some film footage on himself, he sent the only Burt Reynolds film he had -- home movies of himself as a baby!

Remembering the lean years, he admits, "I landed most of my jobs because I was willing to risk my neck. I noticed there was usually a spot with a few lines available for anyone dumb enough to tumble down three flights of stairs or sail out a second story window on fire. My poor parents! I would call home with the exciting news that I was going to be on TV and all my family saw was their son being creamed by a bulldozer. But, at least, they weren't having to send me money.

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"I think my first paycheck as an actor was for \$132. It meant more to me than a million dollars does now. I continued to do all the stunts because I felt I had to earn the money I was being given. As my acting confidence slowly developed, I continued doing all the physical things they allowed me to do because I enjoyed it. And the audience can tell the difference between the actor and a stunt person."

As the '60s approached and live TV from New York became almost a thing of the past, Reynolds moved to Los Angeles and landed a seven-year television contract with Universal. He was given the role of river pilot Ben Frazer in the Riverboat adventure series.

"I got the axe at the end of the first season," he laughs. "Clint Eastwood, David Janssen and I got it the same day. They said Clint's Adam's apple was too big, that David's ears were too big and that I had no talent. I told Clint and David that I might someday cure my deficiency, but that I didn't see any hope for them."

Discussing the early days of his film career, he relates, "Jobs were really hard to find. I did anything, but it was invaluable training. You took dreadful scripts and lifeless characters and tried to breathe some measure of meaning and entertainment into them."

In 1961, he returned to New York to appear in the Broadway play Look, We've Come Through, directed by Jose Quintero.

In 1962, he joined the cast of the top-rated, classic Guns series as half-breed blacksmith Quint Asper. He remained until

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1965. "Everyone urged me not to give up that regular income. But I feared becoming stereotyped as an Indian. I didn't want to be trapped as any particular type."

Reynolds married the British actress Judy Carne in 1963. The union ended in divorce three years later.

According to a new book by Nancy Streebeck, The Films Of Burt Reynolds (Citadel Press), Burt Reynolds' motion picture debut was in "Angel Baby." Then came "Armored Command," "Navajo Joe," "Shark," "Fade-In" and "Impasse." As the quality of his projects gradually improved, he starred in "Sam Whiskey," "100 Rifles," "Skullduggery" and "Fuzz."

"Deliverance," a critical and financial success released in 1972, marked a substantial turning point in Reynolds' career. He was once quoted as saying, "The good stuff began in '72." He starred in the highly-regarded movie as a macho outdoorsman on a tragic weekend trip and demonstrated a forceful dramatic ability. With mixed blessings, Cosmopolitan magazine simultaneously published its then-daring centerfold spotlighting Reynolds. Though his popularity soared, the impact of his work in "Deliverance" seemed diluted, and serious talk of an Academy Award nomination fizzled despite wonderful critical reviews. He had agreed to do the magazine layout only as a heartfelt putdown of the centerfold mentality and to parody the male macho image. "I thought it would be fun and might get a point across," he has said repeatedly, "but it got out of control."

An activity the rising star found more enjoyable was taking to the television talk show circuit. He credits his visits with

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Johnny Carson, Mike Douglas, Merv Griffin and their peers as creating the foundation for much that followed. "I was so bored watching leading men come on those shows, talking about their new films as though they were pure miracles. The pretence was unbearable. It seemed logical that it would be refreshing to have a guest come on and admit he just made a real turkey. It seemed likely that you could be both honest and entertaining."

The supposition was correct. Reynolds developed a larger following. Along the way, he set a new style for talk show guests with irreverence as the cornerstone.

On television, he starred in the title roles of two prime time series. In 1966-67, he was Hawk, an Indian police detective stationed in Manhattan. In 1969, he was Dan August, a small city police lieutenant. In the early '70s, he hosted and co-produced a limited series from various locations. "I wanted to call it The Late Burt Reynolds Show, but the network opted for The Burt Reynolds Late Show. TV can only take irreverence in small doses."

Discussing his television career not long ago, the entertainer admitted, "At one point I was the only actor to have been cancelled by all three leading networks. Do you know how heart-warming that is?"

Reynolds' big-screen career continued with Woody Allen's "Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Sex," "Shamus," "White Lightning" and "The Man Who Loved Cat Dancing." He then tackled "The Longest Yard," one of the top money-makers of 1974-75.

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He filmed "W. W. And The Dixie Dancekings" in Nashville, traveled to Mexico for "Lucky Lady," stretched his horizons by going musical for "At Long Last Love," and starred in "Hustle."

"Gator," a 1976 popular hit in which he starred, was another career landmark, his bow as a motion picture director. He subsequently acted in "Silent Movie," "Nickelodeon" and "Smokey And The Bandit," one of the all-time top-grossing movie blockbusters.

After playing a fun-loving professional football star in "Semi-Tough," he repeated the dual challenge as actor-director for "The End," an unusual and daring comedy hit.

He portrayed a veteran stunt man in "Hooper," one of the most lucrative pictures ever released by Warner Bros., then struck a desperately-desired change-of-pace in the 1979 release "Starting Over." Jill Clayburgh and Candice Bergen as the two women in a recently-divorced man's confusing life earned Academy Award nominations for the romantic-comedy that brought Reynolds the highest praise of his career to that point.

He went to England to film "Rough Cut;" then reprised his legendary "Bandit" role for "Smokey And The Bandit II," which enjoyed the most successful opening weekend in film history; and headed an all-star cast in "The Cannonball Run."

He starred in "The Cannonball Run," among the 10 biggest money-makers of 1981, because its director, former stuntman Hal Needham, has been one of his closest friends since their early Hollywood days. Reynolds was responsible for Needham's directorial debut on "Smokey And The Bandit," and the two also made "Smokey And The Bandit II" and "Hooper" together.

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As usual, Reynolds went immediately into another picture, this time "Paternity," which marked the directing debut of humorist David Steinberg. While filming "Paternity," the star was preparing "Sharky's Machine," his third feature film as actor and director; the urban thriller became a top boxoffice attraction of the 1981 Christmas season.

While still in the editing room with "Sharky's Machine," Reynolds began work on what is roundly considered the most eagerly-awaited of his movie appearances, the musical comedy, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," with Dolly Parton.

Though he is a superstar with an international following, it is directing that most interests Burt Reynolds. "Directing is nothing short of thrilling for me. I hope that my ultimate place in this business is as a director. It's the most rewarding experience I know. Comparing it to acting is like comparing the chess pawn and the chess master. I can easily envision giving up acting. My immediate goal is to direct a picture in which I don't appear. When I act, I'm generally exhausted at the end of the day. But when I'm directing, I'm so full of energy and enthusiasm that I resent the work day coming to an end. We all have particular abilities, and I think directing utilizes more of the mind than acting does. There is a real rush to the feeling that you will either get the blame or the credit for the end result. Being given a movie to direct is like being given the world's biggest erector set."

On the subject of film acting, Reynolds recalls, "When I was a contract player, I would sneak onto the stage where 'Inherit

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The Wind' was being shot. It was a treat to watch Fredric March work, but it was Spencer Tracy who fascinated me. He acted with such brilliant ease and apparent lack of effort. I couldn't take my eyes off Tracy. Then, one day, he strolled over and asked, 'You an actor, kid?' I managed to tell him I was, and all he said was, 'Well, never let anybody ever catch you at it'."

Once termed "a serious professional behind a flip facade," Reynolds has been quoted as saying, "Being a movie star is dirty work, but somebody's got to do it." Actually, he relishes every opportunity to return to the stage, where his career began. In 1972, he turned in an award-winning performance in The Rainmaker at Chicago's Arlington Park Theatre opposite Lois Nettleton, who appears in "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." In 1978, he directed Academy Award-winning actress Sally Field in Bus Stop at the Mantee Theatre in South Florida.

On February 28, 1979, one of the big dreams of his life became a reality when The Burt Reynolds Dinner Theatre opened in his hometown, Jupiter, Florida. Drawing sell-out audiences and top stars to its boards, the theatre consumes much of Reynolds' time and energy and is, he claims, his most personally satisfying activity. He directed and starred in The Rainmaker there, directed Martin Sheen in Two For The Seesaw, played opposite Carol Burnett in Same Time, Next Year, and has plans to both act in and direct future shows at the seaside theatre.

His Dinner Theatre is headquarters for the Burt Reynolds Foundation For Theatre Training, where carefully-selected groups

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of college students receive nine hours credit, plus wages, for their work and education at the institution. At every opportunity, Reynolds teaches, coaches and encourages the young adults who hope for show business careers. He also recruits other leading artists to share their experiences with the students.

"They are my kids," he says with pride. "Whatever I've given them, they've returned it many times over. I wish I had other investments half as rewarding."

Also in the theatre world, Reynolds recently made possible a one million dollar endowed chair at his alma mater, Florida State University. The Burt Reynolds Chair in Professional and Regional Theatre has been called "the richest and most eminent theatre chair in the United States."

In 1981, Reynolds became Doctor Of Humane Letters as he was awarded only the 60th honorary degree conferred in the 123-year history of Florida State University.

About six miles down Indiantown Road from his theatre is the BR Horse Ranch, which he purchased in 1969. Boasting a fine selection of racing and breeding horses, primarily Arabian and Appaloosa, it also has two successful stores and is a top area tourist attraction. Its owner has said, "If everything were over for me tomorrow and my career vanished, the ranch and the theatre would be the only two material things it would be really painful to part with." His parents live on the ranch, in a house built around 1923 as a hideout for Al Capone's underworld pals.

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After completing "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," Reynolds teamed with Goldie Hawn for the upcoming "Best Friends."

Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton star in A Universal/Sunburst Presentation of A Miller-Milkis-Boyett Production of A Colin Higgins Film, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." Starring Dom DeLuise, Charles Durning and Jim Nabors, it was directed by Colin Higgins and produced by Thomas L. Miller, Edward K. Milkis and Robert L. Boyett. The screenplay was by Larry L. King & Peter Masterson and Colin Higgins, based on the stageplay written by Larry L. King and Peter Masterson. Music and lyrics were by Carol Hall, with additional songs by Dolly Parton. A Universal-RKO Picture, Stephanie Phillips was executive producer, and the co-producer was Peter Macgregor-Scott.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

Sheriff Ed Earl (**BURT REYNOLDS**) gets ready for another afternoon of "Sneakin' Around" with Miss Mona.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

A believer in truth and honesty, Melvin P Thorpe (DOM DeLUISE) has Sheriff Ed Earl (BURT REYNOLDS) help him get ready for his TV consumer watchdog show

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May 18, 1982

DOM DE LUISE

"THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS"

In over 20 motion pictures and countless television appearances, Dom DeLuise has become one of America's most recognizable entertainers. However, when he entered the historic Texas State Capitol to begin filming Universal-RKO's "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas" with Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton, none of the thousands of on-lookers recognized him.

As Melvin P. Thorpe, the TV consumer crusader campaigning to close down "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," DeLuise sports a decidedly different look while playing a calculating, charismatic character unlike any he has ever undertaken.

DeLuise reveals, "Not only do I have a new nose, new hair and a new height, but I play a person extremely far removed from my real self or any role I've ever done."

Dom DeLuise was born August 1, in Brooklyn, New York. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. John DeLuise, had two other children, Nick and Ann. "My mother and father came to America from Italy, where they sprang from a peasant background. My dad was a stern man, but he was very wonderful because his first priority was his family. My mother, whose maiden name was Vicenza DeStefano,

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is over 80 now and loves to visit us in California and help me in the garden," Dom relates.

Tracing his interest in entertaining to an early age, DeLuise recalls, "One of my first acting roles was in a school production at the age of seven. I was cast as a penny. The part called for me to roll under a bed as soon as the curtain went up and stay there until I was found in the very last scene. It was my hardest role to date. I detested having to be quiet and out of the action for so long. I have never played a penny since then!"

Inspired by his childhood stage appearances, Dom attended The High School Of The Performing Arts in Manhattan. He enrolled in Tufts College as a biology major, with plans to become a teacher. He soon discovered that the stage held more charm than the science lab.

With the assistance of a high school friend who came from Ohio, Dom joined the Cain Park Theatre in Cleveland, then spent two seasons at the Cleveland Playhouse.

His New York debut was in the hit Off-Broadway production of Little Mary Sunshine. In Another Evening With Harry Stoones, he was featured with another unknown hopeful named Barbra Streisand. He worked several summers on stage in Provincetown, Massachusetts, and it was there, appearing in Mixed Company, that he met his wife, actress Carol Arthur.

Following his Off-Broadway and summer stock training, DeLuise starred in the 1968 Broadway production of Neil Simon's Last Of

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The Red Hot Lovers, plus The Student Gypsy and Here's Love on the New York Stage. He also toured with Mickey Rooney and Joan Rivers in Luv.

Television viewers first noticed young DeLuise on The Garry Moore Show, where his "Dominick The Great" skit, originally performed with Ruth Buzzi, became a popular regular feature. In addition to countless guest-star appearances on all the major TV variety shows, he was a regular on The Entertainers series with Bob Newhart, Carol Burnett and John Davidson, and appeared for eight seasons on The Dean Martin Show. He also became a favorite on the talk show circuit, and has guest-hosted on The Tonight Show.

Following his first special in 1964, called "Bar-Rump Bump," he hosted The Dom DeLuise Variety Show on CBS-TV and starred as Stanley, the central character on NBC's Lotsa Luck series.

He made his motion picture debut in 1966 with Doris Day in "The Glass Bottom Boat," and subsequently acted in "The Busy Body," "What's So Bad About Feeling Good?," "Norwood," "Who is Harry Kellerman And Why Is He Saying Those Terrible Things About Me?" and "Every Little Crook And Nanny."

Director Sidney Lumet cast DeLuise in "Fail-Safe," his first dramatic role. He has appeared in four Mel Brooks movies, "The Twelve Chairs," "Blazing Saddles," "Silent Movie" and "History Of The World-Part I," and in two with Gene Wilder, "The Adventure Of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother" and "The World's Greatest Lover." He worked with Mae West in "Sextette" and starred in Neil Simon's "The Cheap Detective."

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Universal's "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas" is his fifth movie with Burt Reynolds, following "Silent Movie," "The End," "Smokey And The Bandit II" and "The Cannonball Run."

On the subject of Burt Reynolds, Dom DeLuise confides, "Burt and I are close personal friends, which is very unusual when you think about it. I mean, how often do you see two macho sex symbols who really get along like we do?"

DeLuise's more recent feature film credits include "The Last Married Couple In America" and "The Muppet Movie," in which he was Kermit The Frog's Hollywood agent. He then played the title role in "Fatso," which was written and directed by Anne Bancroft.

He says, "I received so much mail after 'Fatso' was released, and it was so touching. People who view themselves as overweight wrote to offer their sincere thanks for someone understanding their complex plight. It's a problem I understand all too well."

The actor starred in the 1980 release "Hot Stuff," which also marked his debut as a film director.

He reflects, "When you're starting out, you will appear any place in any sort of show. Then you crave a legitimate audience and, after a while, you feel you should receive a little pay. You continue struggling to improve yourself and your talent and your condition. I'm particularly pleased that my career has led me to directing a film and some stage work. I'm the kind of person who has to know all the details and who is interested in all the aspects of things."

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As a stage director, he guided Burt Reynolds and Carol Burnett in Same Time, Next Year and directed Farrah Fawcett's exceptionally well-received theatrical debut in Butterflies Are Free, both at The Burt Reynolds Dinner Theatre in Jupiter, Florida.

Though his thriving film career has left little time for extended runs in plays, DeLuise has frequently appeared before live audiences in An Evening With Dom DeLuise, a show he performs around the U.S. and in Canada.

Shortly after completing "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas" in 1982, Dom served as Bacchus XIV at the fabled New Orleans Mardi Gras. In mid-'82, his voice will serve as Jeremy The Crow's voice in "The Secret Of NIMH," a full-length animated feature film. His schedule includes creating a musical about two of this century's infamous characters, Adolph Hitler and Benito Mussolini.

Discussing his role in "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," DeLuise says, "Melvin T. Thorpe is so full of himself and has less humor in his soul than any fictional character I've encountered. Like most fanatics who are absolutely convinced their's is the one and only true way, he will go to any lengths to accomplish his mission. I fear there is a growing number of sensationalists like Melvin P. Thorpe among us.

"But don't get me wrong. I have no complaints. It's the richest role I've ever done -- the absolute best. And, on top of that, there's the music."

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DeLuise is referring to the fact that he sings and stars in one of the musical-comedy's show-stopping production numbers titled "Texas Has A Whorehouse In It!"

Dom and his wife Carol, who enjoys a busy career on stage and in television commercials, head an energetic household full of dogs, cats, rabbits, parakeets, chickens, tropical fish, relatives and three sons, Peter, Michael and David. The entertainer particularly enjoys rebuilding and refinishing furniture.

Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton star in A Universal/Sunburst Presentation of A Miller-Milkis-Boyett Production of A Colin Higgins Film, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." Starring Don DeLuise, Charles Durning and Jim Nabors, it was directed by Colin Higgins and produced by Thomas L. Miller, Edward K. Milkis and Robert L. Boyett. The screenplay was by Larry L. King & Peter Masterson and Colin Higgins, based on the stageplay written by Larry L. King and Peter Masterson. Music and lyrics were by Carol Hall, with additional songs by Dolly Parton. A Universal-RKO Picture, Stephanie Phillips was executive producer, and the co-producer was Peter Macgregor-Scott.

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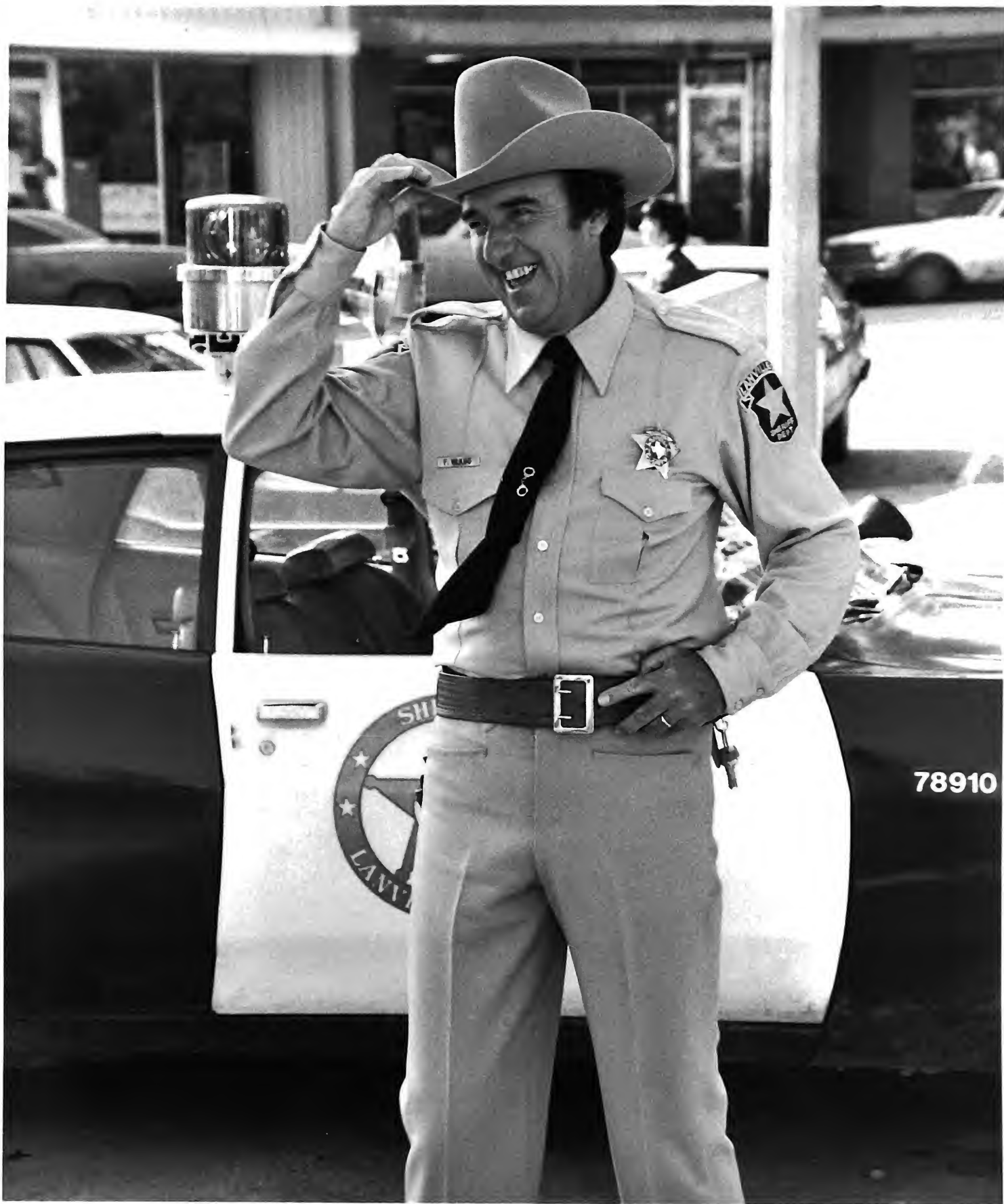


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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

TV consumer watchdog Melvin P Thorpe (**DOM DeLUISE**) makes it his sacred duty to close down the Chicken Ranch

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

Deputy Fred (**JIM NABORS**) does his best to help out—and often succeeds.

2139-14

May 18, 1982

JIM NABORS

"THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS"

Jim Nabors, one of the most popular figures in television history, makes his motion picture debut with Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton in Universal-RKO's "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas."

With Reynolds as the beleaguered Sheriff and Dolly Parton as the legendary Miss Mona, Nabors stars as Deputy Sheriff Fred, a man not totally removed from the "Gomer Pyle" character that propelled him to stardom.

Both Nabors and Reynolds, who play law enforcement officers in "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," are sons of Southern policemen.

Nabors was born June 12, in Sylacauga, Alabama, where he was raised with his two sisters. He majored in business administration at the University of Alabama and upon graduation worked in a series of jobs throughout the United States, including a TV station in Augusta, Georgia. At one point, he found employment answering telephones at the United Nations headquarters in New York, but experienced difficulties when foreign diplomats had trouble understanding his Alabama accent.

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Tiring of the nine-to-five routine and desiring a place in the entertainment field, he became a film cutter for a television station in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Gaining sufficient experience, he moved to Los Angeles, California, to work as a film editor at NBC-TV.

Nabors' first public exposure was at The Horn, a Santa Monica, California, cabaret-theatre that showcases new talent. Occasional performances became nightly appearances as the audience became intrigued with his act, a rare blend of country monologues and rich operatic arias.

When Andy Griffith, star of a top-rated television series at the time, visited The Horn one evening, he invited Nabors to audition for the part of a bumbling small-town Southern gas station attendant named "Gomer Pyle." The unknown performer got the job and a spectacular career was launched.

The "Gomer Pyle" character was such a gem that it soon became a regular feature on The Andy Griffith Show. Before long, CBS-TV debuted a new series titled Gomer Pyle, USMC, with Nabors playing the title role of a small-town Southern boy serving in the Marine Corps. The situation comedy was on the air five seasons before Nabors decided to pursue other activities. During that period, it was consistently among the highest-rated prime-time shows on television.

The star subsequently devoted two seasons to a TV variety show called The Jim Nabors Hour, which showcased his many talents. He next hosted a syndicated TV talk show titled The Jim Nabors Show.

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In 1980 and 1981, he starred regularly at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Dome in The Jim Nabors Polynesian Extravaganza. He became Hawaii's number-one show business attraction during the two year engagement.

As a vocalist, the former high school glee club member has recorded 28 albums. Five of them have become gold albums, and one has reached platinum status.

Nabors is currently a resident of Hawaii, with homes in Honolulu and Maui. Though his contract with the Hilton Hawaiian Village Dome allowed for few outside activities, he did travel to Australia to guest-star in a two-hour special Love Boat episode for television and made personal appearances in New Orleans, Phoenix and Houston. He also taped a television special in 1981 titled "Jim Nabors' Christmas In Hawaii."

This summer, Nabors will star in The Music Man at the Burt Reynolds Dinner Theatre in Florida.

"I hope there will be other movie roles in the near future," Nabors says. "But whatever lies ahead, it will be a long time before anything matches the rare joy of working with Burt and Dolly. They are two of the most terrific people in the world. I think the public senses that, which explains their popularity.

"All three of us are small-town Southern people, so we had a lot in common. We got together one night on location for the movie in Texas. It was just the three of us, and it was one of the really memorable nights in my life. We sang and laughed and told stories about our early days. Later on, the subject turned

(more)

to patriotism and all three of us admitted we get tears in our eyes sometimes when we hear the National Anthem. I suppose our respective backgrounds and what we have been able to accomplish explains why."

Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton star in A Universal/Sunburst Presentation of A Miller-Milkis-Boyett Production of A Colin Higgins Film, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." Starring Dom DeLuise, Charles Durning and Jim Nabors, it was directed by Colin Higgins and produced by Thomas L. Miller, Edward K. Milkis and Robert L. Boyett. The screenplay was by Larry L. King & Peter Masterson and Colin Higgins, based on the stageplay written by Larry L. King and Peter Masterson. Music and lyrics were by Carol Hall, with additional songs by Dolly Parton. A Universal-RKO Picture, Stephanie Phillips was executive producer, and the co-producer was Peter Macgregor-Scott.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

Deputy Fred (JIM NABORS) launches into another story.

2139-13



**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

COLIN HIGGINS is the director.

2139-41

May 18, 1982

COLIN HIGGINS

"THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS"

"I like the role of storyteller," says motion picture director and writer Colin Higgins. "I can visualize myself in another civilization telling tales around the campfire and getting excited when my fellow tribesmen ask, 'What happened next?'"

Higgins' latest movie is Universal-RKO's Burt Reynolds-Dolly Parton musical comedy, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," which he directed. The screenplay is by Larry L. King and Peter Masterson and Higgins.

Higgins came to the production with a rarely-matched film-making record. While still in his 30s, he had created four enormously successful movies, "Harold And Maude," "Silver Streak," "Foul Play" and "Nine To Five."

"I've always been a fan of film musicals," Higgins admits. "That Universal gave me Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton to play the Sheriff and Miss Mona was better than any dream I've ever had."

"Burt, despite all the acclaim and all the popularity, remains generally unrecognized for his subtle acting gifts. And his singing voice is going to be one of the real surprises in this movie."

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Colin Higgins directed Dolly Parton in her only previous acting role, a solidly-acclaimed debut in "Nine To Five." He reveals, "She was wonderful her first time out, but people will be amazed at her growth as an actress.

"Working with Burt and Dolly together was an incredible experience. Once we started, I knew my primary responsibility was to capture the sense of fun, the joy and love they share."

Higgins began life thousands of miles from the Hollywood soundstages. He was born July 28, in Noumea, New Caledonia, one of Edward and Joy Higgins' six sons. His American father and Australian mother resided on the French island in the Pacific due to the elder Higgins' employment. Mr. Higgins joined the U.S. Army at the outset of World War II, and the family moved to Sydney, Australia. In 1946, they moved to Oakland, California, where Colin first attended school. They returned to Sydney until 1958. When they transferred once again to California, Colin elected to stay in Australia in order to finish high school.

Looking back at his childhood, the filmmaker says, "Television came to Australia about the day I left, so I grew up with movies as the major form of entertainment. I can't remember a time when I didn't love movies.

"I spent the last two years of high school in a Franciscan monastery high on a mountain range in New South Wales that was always enveloped in fog. I loved the monastic existence. The only thing I missed was the movies."

In 1959, he joined his family in Menlo Park, California, and enrolled at Stanford University on a scholarship. He relates,

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"I tried out for the Big Game Gaities my freshman year and, surprisingly, I got the lead. I did my own writing, and it turned out to be very successful. It was enormously intoxicating. It was my first heady taste of making people laugh. But I devoted too much time to acting and writing, even joining the local repertory group, and soon lost my scholarship.

"In 1960, I hitchhiked to New York City and studied acting at the Actor's Studio. About the only thing I did there was carry an imaginary spear in a mime production of Macbeth.

He returned to Stanford after about nine months and studied two quarters of his sophomore year before volunteering for the U.S. Army. Following Armed Forces Communications School he was assistant editor of the 2nd Division Bayonet newspaper at Fort Benning, Georgia.

In 1963, the Army sent Higgins overseas as sports and feature editor of the 8th Division Arrow. He managed to find time for a theatrical tour of the Continent, during which he acted in several plays.

With a new-found thirst for education, Higgins enrolled for studies at The Sorbonne in Paris, France, upon his Army discharge in 1965. While there he also played a small role in the film "Le Gendarme á New York." He returned to Stanford in the fall, after hitchhiking through Italy and England during the summer months.

"I was very anxious to become a writer, so I got into the creative writing program headed by Wallace Stegner." He helped pay his tuition by acting with the Comedia Repertory Company, the Stanford Repertory and Once Over Nightly, a successful farce playing in San Francisco.

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Graduating from Stanford in April, 1967, with a Bachelor of Arts degree, he received the Undergraduate Award for the Best Critical Paper, a study of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, as well as an Honorable Mention Award for Best Short Story.

He next did what few Stanford graduates have been known to do upon completion of their studies: he signed on as an ordinary seaman on a ship bound for the Orient. "I've always enjoyed travel," he states, "and it was an opportunity to see Japan, Hong Kong, Manila and the South Seas."

After savoring an incredible selection of films at Expo '67 in Montreal, Canada, Higgins found his future, enrolling as a graduate student in the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) film school.

Higgins says, "I arrived at UCLA with no background in film other than watching them." His very first work, "Opus One," was made for \$100 and was purchased by Filmways for inclusion in its "Genesis I" program, which was shown at theatres and colleges. The script was also published.

His second effort, "Retreat," won the Long Beach Film Festival Grand Prize and was also bought by Filmways for the "Genesis II" program.

In 1969, he was judged Best Actor by the Student Theatrical Society. His final acting role was with Jack Lemmon, playing the second Italian officer, in Garson Kanin's production of Idiot's Delight at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles.

He was made a teaching assistant his final year at UCLA. Early in 1970, he was invited by the University of Minnesota to participate in several film seminars.

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Higgins received an M.F.A. degree from UCLA Motion Picture/Television Division in 1970. During the course of his studies at the institution, he became the hero of a legend that inspires film students around the world.

He remembers, "In order to pay expenses, I took on a part time job as chauffeur, pool cleaner and tennis court sweeper. Living quarters behind a large home came with the job. My employers were Edward and Mildred Lewis. Mr. Lewis was a movie producer with some big credits. After a time, I got up enough nerve to tell Mildred Lewis about my UCLA thesis. She read the script and liked it enough to show it to her husband. Through their efforts, it was sold to Paramount. It was incredible how it happened."

Having previously won second prize in the annual Samuel Goldwyn Awards competition, the Master's thesis/screenplay was the story of a teenage boy and an 80-year-old woman who fell in love. Titled "Harold And Maude," it has, of course, become one of the major cult films in movie history.

"Harold And Maude," starring Ruth Gordon and Bud Cort, was subsequently written by Higgins as a novel. It has since been translated into half-a-dozen languages, including a textbook for Japanese students learning English.

In 1972, Higgins wrote his only television work, "The Devil's Daughter," which earned unusually high ratings as a trend-setting ABC Movie Of The Week. It was produced by Thomas L. Miller and Edward K. Milkis who, along with Robert L. Boyett, have enjoyed

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a happy, profitable relationship with the writer-director that continues through "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas."

At the request of Jean-Louis Barrault, Colin Higgins went to Paris in 1973, and adapted "Harold And Maude" for the stage. Translated by Jean-Claude Carrier, Harold Et Maude ran seven years in Paris and has been translated and performed around the world. The show debuted on Broadway in 1980, though Higgins had no involvement in the production. His filmmaking career was in full swing by then.

In Paris, Higgins was invited by Peter Brook to join his International Center Of Theatrical Research as playwright-in-residence. Throughout 1974, he worked with Denis Cannan on The Ik, a play based on The Mountain People by anthropologist Colin Turnbull. The play was again translated by Carrier and opened in Paris. The following year it was presented in London by the Royal Shakespeare Company. In 1976, as a bicentennial gift from France, the play toured the United States.

During this post-"Harold And Maude" period, Higgins' film career continued. He wrote a version of "The Bluebird" for director George Cukor when Katharine Hepburn was associated with the project, and later wrote a screenplay for the musical "Hair" when Hal Ashby was set to direct.

Higgins' second original screenplay to reach the screen was the smash hit comedy-thriller, "Silver Streak," produced by Miller and Milkis.

Due to the enormous boxoffice success of "Silver Streak," producers Miller and Milkis were able to sell Higgins' next

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screenplay to Paramount Pictures on the condition that Higgins be allowed to direct. "Foul Play," released in 1978, was a comedy-thriller in the Hitchcock style and became a top money-maker of its year.

Higgins next made "Nine To Five." Directing the screenplay he wrote with Patricia Resnick, Higgins guided Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin and Dolly Parton in the 1980 release that turned out to be, once again, solid gold.

Having completed his fifth film comedy, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," Colin Higgins reflects, "My humor comes from a sense I have that life is a kind of cosmic joke. For me, laughter is very close to joy, joy is connected to bliss, and bliss is close to divinity. It's something very spiritual. That moment when we are in the process of this thing called laughter, we seem somehow suspended in time and everything around us is no longer important. We seem somehow connected to what runs this world, which is a sense of 'I love you' coming from all of us."

Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton star in A Universal/Sunburst Presentation of A Miller-Milkis-Boyett Production of A Colin Higgins Film, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." Starring Dom DeLuise, Charles Durning and Jim Nabors, it was directed by Colin Higgins and produced by Thomas L. Miller, Edward K. Milkis and Robert L. Boyett. The screenplay was by Larry L. King & Peter Masterson and Colin Higgins, based on the stageplay written by Larry L. King and Peter Masterson. Music and lyrics were by

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Carol Hall, with additional songs by Dolly Parton. A Universal-RKO Picture, Stephanie Phillips was executive producer, and the co-producer was Peter Macgregor-Scott.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

The Governor (**CHARLES DURNING**) sidesteps some touchy questions from the press.

2139-12

May 18, 1982

STEPHANIE PHILLIPS

"THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS"

Stephanie Phillips, who produced Broadway's enormously successful "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," also served as executive producer on the motion picture version of the musical-comedy which stars Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton.

Phillips was employed from 1960 to 1975 at International Creative Management, the global talent agency where she began as a secretary and ultimately served as senior vice president. She became vice president, television, in 1965, then vice president for legitimate theatre in 1967. She was promoted to vice president, motion picture department, in 1971, and named senior vice president in 1973.

She departed ICM in 1975 and became president of Sunburst Productions, Inc., a position she still holds. The company is an independent motion picture production company associated with Universal.

Between 1976 and 1978, she served as president of Sun Harvester, Inc., a solar energy development, distribution and installation company active in the technological implementation of alternative energy via solar application. Sun Harvester received the first HUD grant awarded to New York City to furnish solar

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heating for the South Bronx area.

In 1977, Phillips wrote and sold two screenplays, "The Running Mate" and "Ring Them Bells." She was production executive for "Nunzio," a motion picture for Universal.

In 1978, she produced The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas on Broadway, a runaway hit that earned seven Tony awards. The following year she produced the first national tour of the popular show, with Alexis Smith in the starring role. She also produced the resident Houston company, which became the longest running show in Texas history and subsequently toured the nation. It is currently enjoying an open-ended run at the Desert Inn in Las Vegas. Additionally, she produced a "bus and truck" touring company of the show which has been on the road for over a year.

Most recently, Stephanie Phillips served as executive producer for the film version of "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas."

Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton star in A Universal/Sunburst Presentation of A Miller-Milkis-Boyett Production of A Colin Higgins Film, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." Starring Dom DeLuise, Charles Durning and Jim Nabors, it was directed by Colin Higgins and produced by Thomas L. Miller, Edward K. Milkis and Robert L. Boyett. The screenplay was by Larry L. King & Peter Masterson and Colin Higgins, based on the stageplay written by Larry L. King and Peter Masterson. Music and lyrics were by Carol Hall, with additional songs by Dolly Parton. A Universal-RKO Picture, Stephanie Phillips was executive producer, and the co-producer was Peter Macgregor-Scott.

PETER MACGREGOR-SCOTT

"THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS"

Peter Macgregor-Scott, a young filmmaker with a remarkably comprehensive motion picture and television background, marks the 42nd movie production of his career with Universal-RKO's new musical-comedy, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas," starring Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton. Macgregor-Scott served as both co-producer and production manager on the film.

The filmmaker was born December 28, in Maidenhead, Berkshire, England. His father, John Caldwell Macgregor-Scott, was a managing director for ABC, Associated British Corporation.

Peter Macgregor-Scott left school at age 16 with one goal, a lifetime in the film industry. His first job was as an assistant to the comptroller at ABC's Elstree Studios. Not long after, he landed a position on a set as a cableman, and soon joined the studio's sound department as a boom man.

He subsequently worked in the cutting rooms with a number of top British film editors. Between 1965 and 1967, he was assigned to two of the world's most popular television series: he was a film editor on The Saint and worked in sound editing on The Avengers.

Macgregor-Scott also worked in various production capacities on eight features for Hammer Films. In 1968, he served as assistant

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director on the movie, "Perfect Friday," and was sound effects editor on "Royal Hunt Of The Sun." During 1968 and 1969, he was assistant director on the acclaimed motion picture, "Julius Caesar," which starred, among others, Charlton Heston, Sir John Gielgud and Jason Robards.

His first job in the United States was producing a CBS Television movie, "Ride The Tiger," followed by "Day Of The Wolves," also for CBS. Between 1970 and 1975, he produced a total of five modest budget pictures in the Orient.

With a broad production background, Peter Macgregor-Scott in 1976 began to establish his reputation as an expert at turning modest investments into entertainment bonanzas. He was production supervisor on the movie "Moving Violation," which starred Eddie Albert and reaped a hefty boxoffice return. Also in 1976, he co-produced "The Great Texas Dynamite Chase," another winner and the first picture directed by Michael Pressman. He also produced the Oliver Reed starrer, "Assault On Paradise."

For Universal, he was production manager on "National Lampoon's Animal House," the small picture that hit a record-breaking jackpot. Staying at Universal, he worked as associate producer on "The Prisoner Of Zenda" and held the same position in 1979-80 on two other huge successes, "The Jerk," starring Steve Martin, and "Cheech And Chong's Next Movie."

He subsequently began his lengthy stint on "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas."

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Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton star in A Universal/Sunburst Presentation of A Miller-Milkis-Boyett Production of A Colin Higgins Film, "The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas." Starring Dom DeLuise, Charles Durning and Jim Nabors, it was directed by Colin Higgins and produced by Thomas L. Miller, Edward K. Milkis and Robert L. Boyett. The screenplay was by Larry L. King & Peter Masterson and Colin Higgins, based on the stageplay written by Larry L. King and Peter Masterson. Music and lyrics were by Carol Hall, with additional songs by Dolly Parton. A Universal-RKO Picture, Stephanie Phillips was executive producer, and the co-producer was Peter Macgregor-Scott.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

After winning the big game, the Texas A&M football team is looking forward to their prize of a night at the best little whorehouse in Texas.
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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

Along with her girls, Miss Mona (**DOLLY PARTON**) runs the best little whorehouse in Texas.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

Consumer watchdog Melvin P. Thorpe (**DOM DeLUISE**) warns his viewers that "Texas Has A Whorehouse In It."

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

Miss Mona's girls welcome the customers to the best little whorehouse in Texas.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

Dulcie Mae (LOIS NETTLETON) is in love with Sheriff Ed Earl (BURT REYNOLDS); he likes her but is in love with Miss Mona.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

(R): Jewel (THERESA MERRITT) helps Miss Mona (DOLLY PARTON) keep order in the best little whorehouse in Texas.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

The Texas A&M football team gets more than the thrill of victory after the big game; they also win a night at the best little whorehouse in Texas.

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**THE BEST LITTLE
WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS**
A Universal-RKO Picture

It's not a cotillion, but rather another time-honored tradition when the Texas A&M football team celebrates their big victory at the best little whorehouse in Texas.

2139-18

THE NEXT TWO WEEKS BELONG TO

US

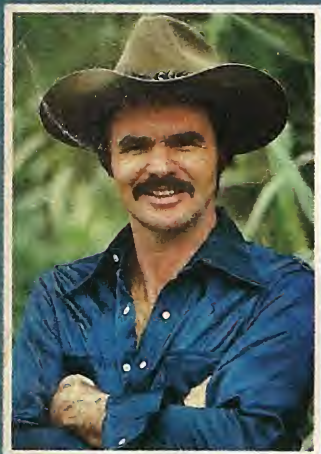
APRIL 15, 1980 / 75 CENTS

**Oscar preview: The stars
rate their own chances**

Linda Ronstadt goes punk

**Inside TV's newest hit:
'That's Incredible'**

THE NEW DOLLY



**goes Hollywood and
plays 'house' with Burt**

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Dolly will spread her new wings (below) on screen with Burt Reynolds in "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas" and as a secretary in "Nine To Five" (inset).



The new Dolly takes a fling at the movies—and Burt Reynolds



By Robert Windeler

"I'm too young to play Miss Mona," says 34-year-old Dolly Parton of her role as the madam in the film version of the ribald Broadway musical hit *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. But Dolly, with her usual Tennessee mountain temerity, is determined to play the hell out of the character—a woman who runs the "chicken ranch" (a whorehouse so named because its farmer clientele often pays in chickens).

"I look enough like a hooker to do it, though," adds Dolly with a laugh.

"Not that I am one, you understand, but I always wanted to look like that, with outrageous makeup, hair, tight clothes, pointed toes, spiked heels and all those things you can't really get away with."

Of course, Dolly herself has been getting away with that and more for years. The fourth of 12 children, she left her first home in the Great Smokies near Sevierville, Tenn., the morning after she graduated from high school. Her destination: Nashville and stardom. In short order, she became country music's queen of sequins and flash. Now, the Parton sound is once again on display in her new album, *Dolly Dolly Dolly*, destined for heavy airplay on pop as well as country stations.

But these days Dolly has a new destination: Hollywood. She's just finishing up her first movie role, as a secretary in *Nine To Five*, co-starring Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin. After that, she'll keep the ball rolling with *Whorehouse*. It's an exhausting schedule, and some advised her not to rush from one film to another. But Dolly had a special inducement to take on *Whorehouse*. Her co-star is Burt Reynolds, and she wasn't about to pass up the opportunity of playing love scenes with Mr. Macho himself.

Recently, Dolly saw the play in New York (where she keeps an apartment overlooking Central Park) and was stunned to find that the relationship between Miss Mona and Sheriff Dodd was more talked about than acted upon. "In the play, the two never even touch," says Dolly, aghast. She immediately started scribbling changes. "There should be more of a direct personal thing between us, not just shared memories of what was," she explains. "I am not going to miss my chance with Burt Reynolds."

(continued)



Making up for work each morning (below) keeps Dolly busy, but she still finds time between takes to write songs for her next album (left).



Dolly and Burt expect to ignite plenty of romantic sparks, but Burt's lady, Sally Field, needn't worry about the sparks catching fire off the set. Dolly's been happily hitched for 14 years to Carl Dean (whom she met in a laundromat on her first day in Nashville). Dean, 37, owner of an asphalt paving business back home, has been visiting his wife in Tinseltown for the past eight weeks. As a result, the Hollywood wolves have been effectively kept at bay. In any event, Dolly insists that her husband is not the jealous type. "His business depends on nice weather, so he's just waitin' out the winter here," she reasons.

In Hollywood, the Deans pursue the same casual life style that they enjoy in Tennessee. "If I'm up writin', he'll swap rooms with my girlfriend Judy, who's also my secretary. If I go to the beach to write songs, he don't think that's no big deal and he'll leave me notes sayin', 'I'm going to San Diego for three days.' That's good. I don't like people crowdin' my space and stranglin' me, and I don't like stranglin' nobody. Creative people need a lot more space, and Carl's creative, so he knows."

Good times on her own include Dolly's recent pajama party with *Nine To Five* co-stars Fonda and Tomlin. "It was to get to know each other for our scenes as pals in the movie," she explains. Dolly also likes going to Lucy's El Adobe restaurant with her hair-

dresser and wardrobe people for a rainy afternoon of "margaritas, playing Password and telling dirty jokes. We took a limousine 'cause we knew we were gonna get a little blitzed."

Nonetheless, Dolly is still a little wary of the Hollywood scene. She had leased a house in Los Angeles but dumped it quickly for the safety and simplicity of a hotel suite. "A country girl gets scared at night in a big city," she says, "especially with so many crazies runnin' around. I didn't want to hire a maid to live in because I don't like people in my face when I come home at night tired. I like the simple life in the country. My farm in Tennessee is where my heart is."

In the meantime, Dolly screens movies at friends' homes or goes with Judy to beauty supply houses to pick up enormous quantities of cosmetics. Dolly dons full makeup at 4:30 a.m. before she goes to the studio, only to have it rubbed off and reapplied by the union makeup man. One of her worst fears is being caught with her image down: "I have a responsibility to my public." With a wink, she adds, "Besides, I'm ugly as hell."

Unlike most stars, who hide from the crowds, Dolly enjoys her forays into the outside world. "I still have fun meeting people," she says. "I have a lot of sisters and friends who are the same size and who could go out and buy for me, but I just like to get out."

(continued)



Wearing her "Nine To Five" jacket, Dolly practices songs she's written for the film, co-starring Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin.

The only thing Dolly won't do is join co-star Fonda's physical fitness class. "I need the exercise," she giggles, "but I don't like group things and I'm funny about who I sweat with." Nevertheless, she considers Fonda a friend and a mentor. "I really just play Dolly as a secretary from Texas—even the accent's the same," she notes of her role. "But Jane is very proud of what I've been able to accomplish on screen. After all, I walked into this just like a blind bull."

At 34, Dolly is a late starter for a movie star. "I didn't want to do it until I could make some sense out of it and feel comfortable in myself that I was ready," she says. "It's worked out real good. If all movies are like this, then I'm going to love it. Of course, my hair is still big and the boobs and the rear end are about the same size as they were three years ago, but I feel like everything else in my life is in pretty

good order. I feel like I've started a whole new life and it's opened so many doors."

Dolly's country music admirers and crossover converts needn't worry that she's forsaken them for the big screen. Dolly considers film "a great outlet for my music." She'll write songs for *Nine To Five* and sing over the sound track, plus she'll add a few of her own numbers to the score of *Whorehouse*. "I like acting," she says, "but I miss the road, the concerts and the people, the band and the travelin'. I'm too much of a gypsy to stay too long on my fat ass, and this going back and forth to the studio every day is too much of a routine. Music—writin' and performin' the songs—will always be my first love."

Dolly intends to spend her time between movies writing songs for her next album. Typically, she's used her experiences in Hollywood as inspira-

tion. To illustrate, she sings a few bars of a new one:

*Mothers hold on to your sons and
your daughters
Should Hollywood claim them you'll
hold them no more*

*For they become clay to the Holly-
wood potters and there's no escape
when they walk through this door*

*Some they go hungry and some go
insane*

*Some to the bottle and some to the
vein*

*Some become users and some
become used*

*And some even make it/but most
never do.**

Dolly herself has no intention of becoming a victim of the "Hollywood potters." "If times get too hard for me out here in Hollywood—who needs them," she sasses. "I was makin' it just fine before and I'll make it just fine again." □

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DOLLY

**An earthy
Parton talks
about her
free-wheeling
marriage, her
fantasies about
Burt, and the
cussin' and
fightin' over
their R-rated
movie**



DOLLY PARTON GIVES WHOREHOUSE A TEXAS SEND-OFF AND IGNORES THE CRITICS

Hot dang! Space creatures may be landing in movie theaters everywhere this summer, but they don't raise half the ruckus Dolly Parton does as Miss Mona, the madam in the \$20 million film version of Broadway's raunchy



musical *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. Bouncing around in steeple high heels, mountainous blond wigs and 14 cleavage-straining costumes, Dolly, 36, generates enough live-wire energy to help an E.T. phone home.

Parton's film debut in 1980's *9 to 5* was clearly just a warm-up for this zaftig after-hours diversion. "I make a better whore than a secretary," sasses Dolly. Two weeks ago she showed up at the *Whorehouse* premiere in Austin, Texas

with co-star Burt Reynolds, ignoring the gibes of critics like columnist Liz Smith, who booed the movie's "Play-boy loutishness" and "obvious sleaze." Later Dolly told fans, "Hell, I liked it all, and if you don't, I don't want to hear about it."

Turning a deaf ear to criticism is understandable, given what Parton terms the "nightmare" of making *Whorehouse*. Before the cameras even rolled last fall, the show's good ole boy writer, Texas journalist Larry L. King, called Parton's casting "too obvious. She looks like she might run a whorehouse or work in one." In King's recently published *The Whorehouse Papers* (Viking), he further blames Dolly for pushing to add her own songs to the Carol Hall score and for suggesting love scenes for herself and the 46-year-old Reynolds, playing a sheriff who was 62 in the Broadway musical and something less than a sex symbol.

"Burt wanted *Smokey and the Bandit Go to a Whorehouse*," King crabbed—and added that Burt and Dolly would wear wigs since they were "both bald." (Burt has accepted King's challenge to a fistfight, but so far their swinging has been confined to print.)

"I didn't hurt nobody on purpose," says Parton, who nonetheless admits, "There was a lot of blood on this project. When it started, it was the most painful thing I'd ever done." To protect her own songs, Parton insists she had "to cuss and fight." She wrote 29, filmed four, but only two (*Sneakin' Around*, a duet with Burt, and her single, *I Will Always Love You*) are in the film. "People think of me as all smiles," adds Parton, "but I can get aggravated. When I got somethin' to say, I'll say it." She insisted on softening her character to avoid offending the folks back home. "I wanted Miss Mona to have reasons to be like she was," says Dolly. "Burt and me kinda ad-libbed things about Jesus, about how He was good to Mary Magdalene."

Parton has admitted that, shucks, even she and buddy Burt had "sensitive times" that "brought tears to his or my eyes." But she is understanding. "Burt was just comin' out of a lot of heartache with Sally Field," she explains. "They had evidently loved each other a great deal." She admits Reyn-

CONTINUED

Dolly fretted about doing scenes from *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* that had her showing customers more than hospitality, but she finally won her family's okay. "I wasn't bein' a whore," she says, "I was performin' a part."

COVER



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COVER

olds lost his temper on the set, "but so did I, and probably more times than he did. Because he's the big star he is, he'd get hacked down quicker. People don't take me that serious."

People, of course, do. Under that wig sits one of showbiz's shrewdest heads. Parton took in \$1.5 million plus a percentage on *Whorehouse*, gets top dollar (\$350,000 per week) in Vegas, and has just released her 28th LP, *Heartbreak Express*, in addition to the *Whorehouse* sound track and single.

Still, it's Dolly's humor that sees her through. How does she look without

the wigs and makeup? "Like shit," she roars. She reports that during filming, "Burt was working with a double hernia and had to pick me up. When they told me Burt wanted to know how much I weighed, I said I'd rupture him completely before I'd tell." Admitting to 5' in height, Dolly is secretive but not sensitive about her weight. "If I can get my dress on, my weight is under control," she has cracked. "My fat never made me less money."

Co-star Reynolds says it never made her less sexy either. "The chemistry between us is special," Burt raved. But it's no love match, chirps Dolly. "We're too good friends to want to screw it up havin' an affair. If he marries and has children, I want to be friends with his wife without her feelin' we'd ever been lovers." Fantasies are another matter. "As a woman," she says, "I like to think he imagined how great it might have been." Though Burt would playfully continue kissing Dolly on the set after the director yelled "Cut," Dolly insists, "We didn't have enough of that to spoil our friendship. Besides," she adds pointedly, "I'm a married woman."

It's a 16-year phantom marriage that sometimes astonishes even Hollywood. Dolly was 18 and fresh from the hills when she met "tall, skinny and handsome" Carl Dean, now 39, in a Nashville Laundromat. The reclusive Dean refuses to be part of his wife's

career; he prefers tending their 200-acre farm, Tara, outside Nashville, or traveling to buy trucks and tractors for resale. He saw *9 to 5* at a local theater, and Dolly thinks he'll view *Whorehouse* the same way. "He likes his freedom," she explains. "If I call him, that's fine, he ain't expectin' it. He doesn't like me home for long because it interferes with his tradin'. So we never really have any hold on each other. And yet we have the ultimate hold."

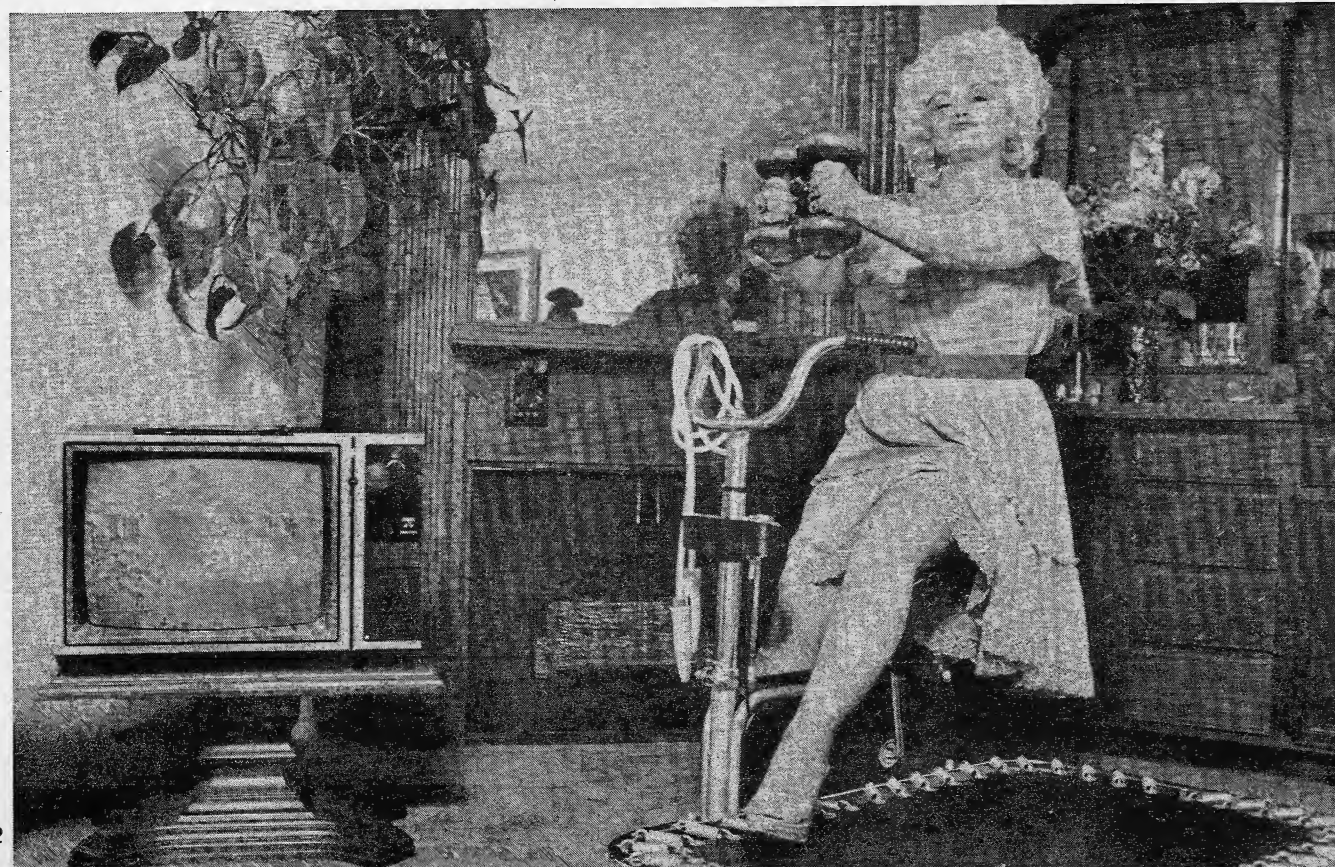
While talk flies about their open marriage, Dolly firmly denies she and Carl will ever divorce. "He was the man God intended for me to have," she says. "We'll just always be together." She swears Carl gets a kick out of the gossip. "He's always saying, 'Well, whose baby are you havin' this week?' To him it's all a joke. There ain't a man in this world could ever live up to my husband. That's one of the things that keeps me from going too far." Dolly says that sexual fantasies add spice to the marriage. "Every now and then when I'm with my husband I'll think, 'Yeah, I'll make love with Burt to-night'—as long as it ain't Burt. My old man don't know about it, but I'm sure he wouldn't mind. I'm sure he makes love to many people," she hoots,

CONTINUED

Dolly rarely uses the exercise equipment in her Beverly Hills hotel suite. "I don't worry about my weight much," she winks.



"If the picture isn't wonderful, we're on the hot seat," said Burt Reynolds, with Dolly and director Colin Higgins (right).



"while I'm the one doin' all the work."

Parton says she and Carl spend more time together than is generally known, but the new, two-bedroom apartment she's just rented in L.A. doesn't suggest a lot of time back home. Children are unlikely under the circumstances. "My husband never really wanted them," says Dolly. "We enjoy bein' each other's kids. I might get pregnant at 50, who knows?" Dolly feels she's always had kids, since five of her 11 brothers and sisters lived with her for some time. "My people are the things I love most," she insists.

Sisters Stella, 32, Frieda, 25, baby Rachel (of the *9 to 5* TV series), 22, and brothers Floyd (Frieda's twin) and Randy, 29, are all performers now. There's no competition, says Dolly, because of their Pentecostal upbringing. She worries more about her parents and non-showbiz siblings. "People keep threatenin' to kidnap them," she says. Then there are the distant "outside relatives" who "want to make money off my fame, and I hate to do anythin' about it because it's family. I get so emotional."

Recently Dolly started seeing her problems as a daytime soap opera. The therapeutic result is *Beulah Faye*, a TV series and possible movie that Dolly wants to base on the Parton clan. But first there's a 31-city concert tour beginning next week, the filming of her first solo TV special, and a line of Dolly Parton clothes (including a 9-to-5ers' label for working women) and cosmetics (Everything Beautiful), both due next summer. "I'm making lots of money for the government," she laughs.

For herself, she's making another kind of hay. "Every seven years I sit down and make a whole new plan," she explains. The latest one was prompted by a short hospital stay last March for "female problems" and emotional problems as well. "Nothing serious, but I had a chance to think about all those reasons I might have gotten sick to start with," she says. The "heartache" of *Whorehouse* has left her in no hurry to return to movies unless she is "pretty much in control." Her new strategy includes more time with family and less worry about keeping up the Dolly image. "I don't care how ugly I get as long as I'm healthy," she grins. "I figure my best years are goin' to be between 50 and 100." □
(This story was written by Peter Travers and reported by Lois Armstrong in L.A.)



Keeping up a movie star image is a strain, but singer Dolly reasons: "I still have the good job I had before Hollywood."

DOLLY PARTON'S CONTROVERSIAL NEW MOVIE ROLE—



"I never wanted to be in the movies," declared Dolly Parton. "I had never done any acting at all, never thought I'd be particularly good at it." But 20th Century-Fox thought differently and signed Dolly to a three-picture deal.

Dolly's first movie will be completed soon. *Nine to Five* also stars Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin. "It's a comedy about three secretaries, and I play a good hearted southern girl who works in a Xerox room," Dolly revealed.

So far, so good: Dolly always claimed that she wanted roles that were tailored to her personality — "I'm goin' to have to be Dolly Parton without bein' Dolly Parton." And "good hearted southern girl," is as apt a description of a side of Dolly as any. However, the question arises: how much of the real Dolly will we see when she portrays the madame of a brothel in her upcoming film, *The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas*?

It was apparent that Dolly herself had a great deal of ambivalence toward the project. One day it was on then it was off again. The role appealed to her, but she was afraid to offend her fans. Still, the movie,

SHE'S DONE WITH "NINE TO FIVE" AND NOW RUNS "THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS"



based on the successful Broadway play (which in turn was based on a true story) is a warm and earthy project that Dolly found hard to resist. She thought she might just write a few tunes for the movie; but then, in typical Dolly fashion, she figured if she was going to do that much she might as well go all the way with it.

Even then it wasn't easy going. Twentieth Century balked at the Dolly's salary demands. She and co-star Burt Reynolds negotiated as partners and asked for \$6 million between them and used the fact that they couldn't have one without the other as a bargaining tool. One top movie exec made the statement, "It's reached the point in the industry where someone finally has to say 'no' to performers' insane salary demands. *Best Little Whorehouse* is a tremendous success as a play and will be a spectacular success as a movie — without Reynolds and Parton."

Now that's a pretty definitive



statement — but it looks like they changed their minds. For a while it appeared that Willie Nelson was going to get the Reynolds part as the sheriff and Dolly's part was a toss-up between Barbara Mandrell and Crystal Gayle. When all was said and done, however, it was Dolly and Burt.

The character that Dolly will portray is a warm-hearted, if tough minded, woman who runs a whorehouse in a small Texas town. The plot revolves around the tension between the madame and officials who are trying to close the house down. In many ways the officials appear to be a lot more dirty-minded than anyone working or using the whorehouse. In this way, Dolly, who has never shied away from talking about sex and who freely admitted once, "I would look like a streetwalker if you didn't know that was an image," may be well suited to the part. Like her character, Dolly looks at sex as a natural thing: "I always loved sex. I never had a bad experience with it. I was just very emotional. I felt I could show my emotion just like I showed my emotion with words. If I felt I wanted to share my emotion, then I did. To me sex was not dirty. It was something very intimate and very real. I don't remember ever being afraid of it. I wasn't afraid the first time I tried it."

There is nothing vulgar in Dolly Parton's attitudes. The vibrant, good-hearted personality that overshadows the garishness of her clothes and extreme nature of her build will probably shine through in this role as well.

How does Dolly feel about her future in the movies? "The people at 20th Century-Fox feel like I can be, or that I am a natural actress. When they approached me all I said was, 'I don't know if I can or I can't,

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but if you think I can and you want to take the chance, I'll take it with you. 'It's as simple as that.

"I've been asked to do the Mae West story. I don't know that much about Mae West. A lot of people have often compared me with her... not our looks or not just the way we seem to be built or anything, but our attitudes, you know. We were both creative and we knew what we wanted and we pretty much rolled into the things we did. And they say she pretty much wrote all the things she had done. I've never seen her. Also somebody felt I should do the Marilyn Monroe story. I don't think I want to play somebody else. I think I'm a character myself. For me to play somebody else's character would not be as wise as for me to create one of my own."

Someday Dolly would like to write a script about her own fascinating life: "I'm goin' to write my own story, but it's not time yet. There's so much to my life that I could write a series of things if I wanted. I can take a subject and make a full-length movie, if I want to do that." But, barring a Dolly-penned script, one writer who Dolly would like to work with is Neil Simon.

"I saw *The Goodbye Girl* and that's the kind of thing I see myself in. It's got depth, it's a comedy, it's got love... It just reminded me of the way I would react under the same conditions. You know, crazy and stupid, tryin' to make the best out of a bad situation... Neil Simon may not even be interested in me, period. But I can see myself doin' the kind of things he writes."

So you can look forward to seeing a lot of Dolly Parton in the coming year. First in *Nine to Five* and then in *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*.

The energy that Dolly possesses is truly phenomenal. She is also going to begin her engagement in Las Vegas and has completed her latest album, *Dolly, Dolly, Dolly*. It seems that a great deal of her energy stems from the confidence and exuberance she brings to every project.

"I don't think there's anything I can't do. Under the right conditions I could just about do anything. Even a Broadway play... If it was something written just for me, I could do anything. Most people don't have that kind of confidence in themselves." Lucky for us; Dolly Parton does.



Take a look at this old picture we found of a very different looking Dolly.

Closing Down La Grange

In which the Long lens of the Law uncovers Sin and Corruption in Babylon-on-the-Brazos, and the Electric Bounty Hunter confronts the Nightmare Sheriff and the Banshee madam to unearth a Bizarre Tale.

by Al Reinert

True Confessions

ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1, 1973, the La Grange Chicken Ranch, the Oldest Continually Operating Non-Floating Whorehouse in the United States, was closed down. The Texas Chamber of Commerce elected to ignore the passage of an establishment possibly older than all its members; and the State Historical Society, equally misfeasant, overlooked the shuttering of the house that slept more politicians than the Driskill Hotel and the Governor's Mansion combined.

You all know about the Chicken Ranch of course. It was just about the first tourist attraction I heard about when I came to Texas. But, then, I came to Texas to be an Aggie, so that explains that. Later on I even learned that there was a town called La Grange nestled somewhere on the outskirts of the whorehouse of the same name.

Hell, I even went to La Grange once. The whorehouse, I mean. Not, mind you, because I had any truly unquenchable perversions that required a trip to La Grange to unleash, but, rather, because I figured that if one was going to be an Aggie, well then, Be An Aggie. The pilgrimage to La Grange sits close to the heart of The Aggie Myth, as central to the catechism as standing at football games and building the Bonfire for the Texas game.

We went on Thursday night when they had the \$8 Aggie Special, trekking down in an old Pontiac full of fraudulently-purchased Lone Star and a thousand obscene variants of some drastically original horny Aggie fantasy.

We circled around town for a while, body temperature rising in inverse proportion to the declining stash of Lone Star and the increasing depravity of the fantasy, a deep, twisted well of prurient anxiety gradually filling to the point where no adolescent squeamishness could possibly abort an explosive gusher of Sinful Lust.

How's that for metaphor? eh? Us Aggies get a three-syllable handicap in this magazine-writin'. In any case, the air went out of the fantasy as soon as we pulled into the Chicken Ranch parking lot and the first person we spotted was a deputy sheriff. He was just there to help park cars, though, so we proceeded on up to the door where Lilly, the black maid-the only black as a matter of strict fact (historical accuracy being an important part of articles like this) who ever passed the doors of the Chicken Ranch-checked our phony I.D.'s to make sure we were 21 and let us in.

We sauntered into the parlor where we drunkenly introduced ourselves to a half-dozen local farmers, a couple of cross-country truck drivers, and a fellow pilgrim who'd journeyed all the way down from Nebraska-and met three young ladies who either worked there or were truck drivers, too, we weren't sure which.

One of the young ladies offered to sell us a Coke for 50 cents, which we declined, and then one of her friends asked us for a quarter to play the jukebox, which we cheerfully provided. My friend Richard, who was still trying to decide if they worked there or were just visiting truck drivers, thought he'd break the ice a little by asking one of them if she wanted to dance, which she didn't.

"What's with this dancin' stuff, honey?" is what she said. "Ya wanna do some business here or not?" That's when we decided she must be one of the U.T. coeds we'd heard about.

Pretty soon after that I picked one of the ladies (or she picked me, quite possibly, my recollection being sort of hazy) and we wandered off down the hall to one of the bedrooms. The walls of the room possessed an angularity that bespoke distracted carpentry, all of them covered with irregular splotches of pastel paint, and the furnishings consisted of a bed, a dresser and a sink, all rather commonplace in appearance and not at all meeting my expectations.

The top dresser drawer had been left open to reveal an intriguing assortment of oils, photographs, and leather goods, but I held firm for the Aggie Special which didn't include any of its contents. Ruthie, who was the lady I'd picked (or who'd picked me), just rolled her eyes and made a face when I told her I only had the eight dollars anyway. She told me to "Git yer clothes off, honey," and left to go deposit my money someplace.

I thought for a bit about how this wasn't the way we'd planned it on the way down and was consequently a little slow getting undressed, being still garbed in my pants when Ruthie got back. "What's this?" she asked me. "We ain't got all night ya know." I apologized for being so slow and took my pants off. She then started poking and tugging at me, "checkin fer diseases," she said, a bit of foreplay that possessed all the sensuality of my Army physical. Ruthie next threw me down on the bed, took off her own clothes and lay down beside me, and told me that for just eight dollars I didn't get to kiss her. Pleased that I hadn't brought any more money, we just started pawing and pulling at each other and, next thing I knew, she was on top of me and asking if I was "finished already, honey?" "Well, uuuh ..." I said. Then she pulled me up off the bed, washed us both off, and told me ta "git yer clothes back on, honey." It had been what's known in the trade as a "Four-get": Get up, Get on, Get off, and Get out. I met the rest of my cohorts outside, all except for Richard for whom we had to wait another hour and a half. He'd been so abased at being turned down for his dance that he'd gone and splurged \$40 on a lavish degeneracy of sufficient novelty that its graphic description entertained us all the way back to College Station.

A Sentimental History of America's Oldest Whorehouse

When old Frank Lotto published the first History of Fayette County back in 1902, he wrote, with what must have been a sly snicker to himself, that "The City of La Grange has made a reputation for sociability over the whole state.

It was nicely located for friendly ambience, being sprawled around high limestone bluffs on a parabolic stretch of the Colorado River in that part of Central Texas where the coastal plains begin gently ballooning into a sinuous undulation that goes westering off to the Hill Country. Dense battalions of age-disfigured live oaks, camouflaged in clouds of hanging moss and sentried by towering cedars, occupy the creek and river bottoms while post oak columns skirt the soft green edges of Bermuda Grass hillsides and cypress files demarcate the boundaries of old Spanish land grants. The Second Congress of the Republic of Texas, enticed by vistas "that but few countryes on Earth can compare with," overwhelmingly voted to establish their permanent capital at La Grange, and only President Sam Houston's self-serving veto kept it in the still-unbuilt jerkwater burg named for himself.

If the easy-rolling richness of Fayette County posed no strong attraction for General Sam, it proved a powerful lure across the world in Central Europe. Beginning in the 1830's it became the terminus for South Germans and Bohemians in flight from famine and persecution. They brought with them an industrious capacity for small farming, which still endures, and an independence of mind bordering on the perverse, which also still endures. Ever since 1860, when they voted not to secede with the rest of the state, Fayette County has maintained a strong tradition of political aberrance.

The immigrants also imported a zesty beer-hall enthusiasm for rowdy pleasures. Indeed, nothing in the county's history has proven so consistently unpopular as Temperance, which went down to its first massive electoral defeat in 1877. It was the kind of indulgent tolerance that could sanction the longest-running brothel ever to open its doors and beds in America.

Just when exactly those doors and beds did open is a point of some contention. Dates offered range all the way from 1844, based largely on myth, to 1915, when the house was installed in its present location on the outskirts of town. The most likely occasion for its founding is somewhere in between, with several La Grange oldtimers remembering its definite existence prior to the turn of the century. Ernest Emmerich, who was town marshall in neighboring Round Top back around the First World War, remembers then-County Sheriff August Loessin telling him it was there when August took office in 1894.

The debate, in any case, is spuriously academic. Just as a history of North America, despite its prior existence, doesn't really commence until Columbus, so the True Story of the Chicken Ranch doesn't begin until the arrival, in about 1905, of Ms. Faye Stewart, alias Jessie Williams, and known to friends, employees, numerous intimate acquaintances and elusive Posterity as Miss Jessie.

Originally from Hubbard, up near Waco, Miss Jessie was a whorehouse madam on an epic scale, prostitution's answer to Casey Stengel or Vince Lombardi, author and actor, is one of the great chapters in the journal of her profession. A woman of undeniable personal resonance, with rough-hewn country charm and shrewd backwoods tenacity, she is still discussed with soft-eyed affection and reverential tones by those who knew her.

Buddy Zapalac, the editor of The La Grange Journal, says, 'She just had ta be one a the most amazin' women who ever lived. She was strong! But she was generous, too. And whooooh, Boy! but she was a smart one.' It was Miss Jessie who somehow brought discipline and profit to the house while making peace with the surrounding community at large and its power center in particular; she also negotiated the tacit treaties that enabled her house to survive in the face of contradiction and indignation, a diplomatic performance rivaling those of Henry Kissinger.

Among the first allies she acquired were the Loessin brothers, August and Will, the former being County Sheriff and the latter, younger, being at once the City Marshall in La Grange and his brother's chief deputy (and later his successor as Sheriff). Widely venerated as peace officers, the brothers Loessin seem genuinely to have been well-respected and able peace-keepers, August being the only Central Texas Sheriff to crush the Ku Klux Klan during its bloody pre-War resurgence and Will earning a statewide reputation for ingenious detective work.

The early basis for their pact with Miss Jessie seems to have been a kind of mutual coexistence. She foreswore many of those sidelines that would seem natural in a country cat-house, liquor most notably, and operated it as peaceably and businesslike as the Post Office. The two sheriffs, for their part, just ignored it.

It was a beneficial relationship. Miss Jessie prospered and, in 1915, she abandoned the battered downtown hotel they then occupied, and moved her business to the southeastern outskirts of town. She brought in a few new girls as well, including two sisters who learned their craft in the break-hell East Texas oil boom and were to serve as middle-management. The house was by now rooting itself into the communal fabric of La Grange and its resident employees, encouraged by Miss Jessie to stay on a permanent basis, had fashioned a broad array of links with the townsfolk; when the boys from La Grange went overseas to Save Democracy in The Great War, the girls from the Ranch sent them cookies.

Soon after the end of the War, Will Loessin was elected to succeed his brother. At some nebulous, earlier point he had made a discovery that struck a glorious chord in his detective heart, one that would re-percuss down through all the following years of Fayette County law enforcement. This was, in essence, that men, significantly including local lawbreakers, are (1) habitually prone to bursts of braggadocio, often self-incriminating and helpfully revealing, when they are in bed with women, and (2) these same men were regularly inclined to go to bed with women out at Miss Jessie's. Wonder of Wonders! Will Loessin, in one of the grandest strokes in the annals of detectivory, had buried deep in the twisted solar plexus of the criminal element an incredibly Organic Wiretap.

And Miss Jessie, not disinterested in further cementing her alliance with the forces of justice, was graciously amenable to stepped-up cooperation. From thence forward, continuing on through all of his 26 years as County Sheriff, Will Loessin would journey nightly out to the edge of town to visit with Miss Jessie and learn what intelligence may have been ferreted out by this subtle pack of eavesdroppers.

The Ranch itself was undergoing a little facelift about this time. Not only had Miss Jessie added on a couple of rooms to accommodate her burgeoning flock, but the Gilded Age of post-war ebullience was sending liberating vibrations even unto the outskirts of La Grange. The girls acquired shiny new cars and flapperish regalia, the rooms received new paint and overstuffed furniture, frenetic snatches of jazz were caught drifting through the woods, and Miss Jessie's unpretentious country whorehouse almost became a bawdy citified "sporting house" as it passed through the gaudiest phase of its lifetime.

The emancipation of the Ranch, though, did not include any creatively expanded repertoire of available pleasures. Waco-bred Miss Jessie had always looked with fundamental distaste on all possible erotic combinations that went beyond the dully conventional missionary position, and the continentally-whetted appetites of war-returned farmboys made her furious.

One La Grange oldtimer, a thrice-weekly regular back in those days, remembers trying to explain to a girl named "Deaf" Eddie how to navigate one pleasantly intricate movement: "See, we called 'er Deaf Eddie cause she really was harda hearin', so I was havin' ta talk purty loud. Well, whut happened is thet Miss Jessie heard me an come acrashin' into there hittin' me with a big iron rod and hollerin' 'bout turnin' her girls into French whores. She throwed me out an' wouldna let me back fer a month."

Prices at Miss Jessie's then were on an easily computed sliding scale based solely on the time consumed, climbing from \$3 up to about a \$40 maximum, and not until years later did other variables serve to

complicate the equation. The only disruption of these simple accounting procedures came with the Great Depression, when rural economies collapsed into a chaos of barter and salvage.

Miss Jessie, whose Depression-sparked social consciousness would make her one of the fiercest New Dealers in the county, promptly adjusted to the new market by accepting payment in farm produce at the straightforward rate of one chicken, one screw. The backyard was quickly over-run with scratching and fluttering Dominickers and Rhode Island Reds, and the heretofore anonymous whorehouse became the Chicken Ranch.

Thus christened, the Ranch passed quietly through the rest of the decade, the only disruptions caused by a rare and foolish Republican who had the temerity to challenge Miss Jessie's estimation of Franklin Roosevelt. The Ranch was by then thoroughly imbedded in the webwork of life in Fayette County. Miss Jessie contributed money to local civic clubs and church bazaars, establishing the policy of municipal philanthropy that in later years would see the Ranch become the largest sponsor of the Little League. And, while stopping short of joining the Jaycees, Miss Jessie manipulated capital expenditures in a way that best suited everyone, not excluding herself. Deliveries from groceries, hardware stores, dairies, five and dimes, all were rotated on a weekly basis so that each would receive their share of the Ranch's business.

Early in his tenure, Will Loessin had begun the tradition, which continued on up to this year, of reporting on conditions at the Ranch to the twice-annual Fayette County Grand Jury. Estimates of revenue, reports on fights or arrests or information learned were all provided, and an occasionally rambunctious Grand Jury would troop on out to see for themselves, Miss Jessie pleasantly showing them around. In later years, girls going to work at the Ranch would stop first at the sheriff's office to be mugged and fingerprinted, so that checks could be run to see if they'd ever done something illegal somewhere.

One of those early Grand Juries began the practice of requiring weekly medical exams for the girls at Miss Jessie's, and the office of County Medical Examiner was created solely for that purpose. In more modern times, after the office was abolished, the girls would appear every Thursday at the La Grange Health Clinic to have their non-contaminatory status officially certified.

When America found itself in another war in 1941 and a second generation of Fayette County farmboys left to participate, the girls at Miss Jessie's again sent cookies and wrapped bandages for the Red Cross. The Army moved in a training center at nearby Bastrop and, apparently concerned that indiscriminate whoring might short-circuit the American soldier's innate killer instincts, launched a wide-ranging campaign against prostitution. Life at the Ranch temporarily became a little more circumspect, but the officially subversive operations went unimpaired for the duration.

The end of the War brought, amidst other happenings, the retirement of Will Loessin; his replacement, ascending almost mechanically into the vacancy, was T. J. "Jim" Flournoy, who had been Will's chief deputy for a dozen years before putting in a stint as a Texas Ranger. In the same inevitable manner that a national administration will assume the accumulated allies and obligations of all its predecessors, Jim Flournoy inherited all those instinctive understandings and tacit pacts that Miss Jessie had forged 40 years earlier with the Loessin brothers; the momentum of the Ranch swept past another milepost without a missed step or a side glance.

Some of that feisty energy that had driven her thus far had begun to subside, though, and, while post-war prosperity was acknowledged in the form of a couple more tacked-on bedrooms, the attendant post-war exuberance inspired no response at the Ranch. They just settled a few years earlier into that semi-moribund inertia that captured the country through most of the fifties.

Miss Jessie, wheelchair-bound in her last years, watched the decade turn from the front porch of the Chicken Ranch, still firmly in command and admitting respect for no one since Franklin Roosevelt. She died, Faye Stewart died, in 1961, mourned by many who were too embarrassed to demonstrate it and missed by four generations of men whose passage from innocence she had administered.

She had, moreover, wrought permanent change in the world she occupied: her Ranch, at some ephemeral point in its passage through the years, had transcended its role as merely a whorehouse to become an Institution, as important a work in the Gallery of Texana as Spindletop or San Jacinto. The Whorehouse at La Grange had passed mouth-to-ear through the locker-room memories of four generations of Texas men, and its widespread acceptance was tacit acknowledgement of its new status.

The Texas Legislature made reference to it in light-hearted floor debate as early as the forties, and Miss Jessie

returned the compliment by amending her cash-only policy to include the acceptance of state payroll checks. Books, magazines, and newspapers all wrote sympathetically of its existence and, as the sixties appeared, adventuresome students would make it a topic for term papers and masters' theses.

Indeed, if the Chicken Ranch is viewed strictly as an illegal brothel, then the largest part of the State of Texas was for 20 years involved in a cover-up of unmatched proportions. More likely, the Ranch had passed beyond reach of The Law into another, more sentimental, dimension where The Law serves no purpose.

Miss Jessie was to be succeeded by a woman as thoroughly schooled for her role as Jim Flournoy had been for his. Edna Milton had come to work at the Ranch in 1952, and by the time Miss Jessie died was chief lieutenant in the management of the house. Red-haired and tough-skinned, with clear-green Laser-piercing eyes, Edna evokes an authoritative confidence that could as easily run a Teamsters local as a whorehouse. She arranged to purchase the Ranch from Faye Stewart's estate and installed herself as madam, moving into the master bedroom that still contained Miss Jessie's massive four-poster walnut bed. To all appearances the house absorbed the shift in management as effortlessly as it had the paper alteration of ownership, the only real changes being the installation of air-conditioning and the offering of a limited variety of 'exotic extras.' Edna, even before Miss Jessie died, had been in charge when the Ranch weathered its greatest crisis: Texas Attorney General Will Wilson, who wanted to be a U.S. Senator, had sounded the call for a great moral crusade aimed vaguely at making the state safe for the easily outraged, who presumably form an impressive bloc of voters.

State law enforcement officials were dashing hungrily around on the hot trail of sin, very nearly arresting the entire island of Galveston, and it seemed likely that the Chicken Ranch, as the state's most notoriously renowned whorehouse, would be a sure target.

Edna's response was to go underground, making the pretense of shutting down while admitting regular customers through the back door. It was good enough. Like all crusades, Wilson's choked on the heat of its own righteousness and he soon went away. The Ranch slipped back into a normal high gear and went humming along into its future, sweetly indifferent to muffled indignation or pious politicians, prepared to cope when necessary with the inevitable next crusade.

The next crusader, though, would come armed with cameras.

The Electric Bounty Hunter Meets the Nightmare Sheriff

Marvin Zindler was a public curiosity [See "Marvin Zindler, Consumer Lawman," TM February, 1973] even before he became a nightly refutation of McLuhan's thesis that television is the province of the cool. Marvin is most assuredly not cool, and never has been.

Back when he was heading the Consumer Protection Division of the Harris County Sheriff's Department, he would inveigh against truthless advertisers or fast-dealing car salesmen with all the indignant wrath of a Calvinist preacher accosted in the pulpit by some hot-eyed, leering flasher. And always with an audience. Marvin Zindler was to huckstering what Jehovah's God was to sin, with the exception that Marvin always had cameras there to record the pointing of his vengeful finger.

He had a fair penchant for attracting attention. Stories used to float around the city rooms of Houston newspapers about how Marvin would wait two and three days before serving a warrant until a TV crew was available to immortalize his crimebusting; about how Marvin would deluge courthouse reporters with Agatha Christie-style press releases extolling his exploits; about the time The Houston Post, on Marvin's "hot inside tip," bannered the four-inch headline HARRELSON IN MEXICO at the same moment the accused murderer was being arrested in Atlanta.

Back when he was the police reporter for a Houston radio station, Zindler would appear just before his on-air signal to relate action-packed on-the-scene accounts that he'd just read from the morning papers. Other reporters used to substitute dated papers and he'd dash in to announce, over the air, "This is Marvin Zindler, On The Scene. ..." and launch into a breathless blow-by-blow of last month's liquor store holdups.

Zindler even looks the part, which is to say artificial. His nose and chin were metamorphosed long ago to meet superstar specifications, and his head is permanently hidden by a handsome Cary Grant toupee. And his clothes, equally handsome, are custom-tailored to conceal the pads he wears on his shoulders and buttocks to fill out his figure to superstar proportions.

It's always been easy, of course, to make fun of Marvin Zindler, as do most of his colleagues in journalism.

But, strangely enough, it just won't wash. For one thing, he's so absurdly up-front about those wigs and pads and nose-jobs of his, and he confesses instantly, cheerfully, to a raging egomania. It's hard to laugh at somebody's closet skeletons when they rattle them at you.

And then there're his eyes, as warmly blue and gentle (and genuine) as any superstar could hope to possess, the only external hint that within that ludicrously handmade body of his there's a soft nub of sincerity and compassion.

Danny, who's sort of a hustler, remembers being arrested by Marvin way back when he was just another deputy in the Warrants Division: "Most of the crooks I know have a lotta respect for Zindler. He was a straight-up cop. After he'd busted ya, he'd stick around till ya were mugged an' printed an' in the tank, an' he'd make sure ya had cigarettes before he'd leave."

He still shows that same concern in his role as Channel 13's consumer affairs reporter, staying long after work to answer a blizzard of phone calls from 12-year-olds with lost bicycles and dowdy matrons who don't like the gas company. He rationalizes his media-mongering by saying "Most corporations involved in, say, false advertising will just laugh at a \$50 fine, but if you show up with a TV camera and give 'em bad publicity then they'll shape up."

There's a hard truth there. If Marvin's style, a zany blend of P.T. Barnum and Dudley Do-Right, has made him notorious, it's also made him effective; instead of being just another petty public ombudsman, he's become a kind of Electric Bounty Hunter, striking Media-Terror into the fast-talking hearts of consumer bilkers.

That's why it all seemed a little strange when Marvin set out after the Chicken Ranch: while there may well be lots of people who don't like the place, irate consumers aren't among them. But Marvin says his crusade against the Ranch wasn't based on any righteous shock at all the whoring going down out there. "I'm no moralist," he'll tell you. Marvin's targets were bigger than just sin: political corruption and Organized Crime. Marvin's story is that he got his hands on a Department of Public Safety (DPS) intelligence report that had been made last year. This report, according to Marvin, says that the Chicken Ranch-together with another, less reknowned, little whorehouse in Sealy-grosses "a conservative minimum" of \$3 million a year, and that most of this money was going into numbered bank accounts in Mexico by way of lavish payoffs to all manner of corrupt state and local officials. It's these officials, the story goes, who really own the Chicken Ranch and whose power in Austin allows it to stay open.

Then there's the black specter of Organized Crime, whose ruthless involvement Marvin keeps invoking. Marvin's definition of Organized Crime, though, is not exactly what you'd first think. It has nothing to do with the Mafia. Or the Syndicate. Or Chicago or New York or even Houston. It maybe has something to do with a "circuit" of other country whorehouses through which girls are rotated, but it's hard to say. Marvin's definition of Organized Crime is pretty vague.

Nonetheless, Marvin bought this DPS report at face value, lock-stock-and-brothel. He has great faith in the Texas Rangers.

When he first saw the report last January, he says, he was asked by the Rangers not to do anything until they'd had the chance to "move in." Marvin agreed. Then, along about May, Marvin got word that the DPS-Ranger investigation had been canceled. "That's when I really got mad," remembers Marvin, "cause it proved to me that somebody from higher up was interfering with the enforcing of the law."

That's when Marvin went to work. He recruited as his collaborator Larry Connors, a young TV newsman who is a first-rate investigative reporter and the most hard-ass interviewer this side of Mike Wallace. The Zindler and Connors team went underground to begin their investigation.

They sat in the woods outside the Ranch counting and photographing the patrons. Connors, together with a cameraman (but, sadly, no TV camera) handled the "inside work," discovering first-hand that there really was prostitution going on in there.

After three months of this sort of thing they were able to prove that, sure enough, there's a whorehouse in La Grange. That's when they broke the story and ran up against, or into, County Sheriff T.J. "Jim" Flournoy. Old Jim Flournoy looks like he leapt full-bodied from one of Bobby Seale's nightmare visions of a county sheriff, a pot-bellied, gun-totin', hulking incarnation of Frontier Justice. Slow-talking, in keeping with his thought patterns, Big Jim's style of dealing with the world is based largely on Threat, and is generally successful. His brother Mike, who is the sheriff over in Wharton County, has a reputation for carrying out

hithreats, but big Jim's never gone overboard with that sort of thing.

Like his predecessors, Big Jim was easily accommodated to the existence of the Chicken Ranch. Back in 1958 he'd even had a Hot Line installed to connect the Ranch and the Sheriff's Office, and he's one of the biggest defenders of its operations. "It's nevrah caused no trouble round here," he says, "no fights or dope or nothin. I ain't nevrah got no complaints."

It's been a positive boon to law enforcement, if you listen to the sheriff. Because of the Ranch, "Thar's nevrah been no rapes while I been Shurff," he relates. "O course thet don't count no nigger rapes," he adds, which is probably fair enough since blacks weren't admitted to the Ranch anyway.

He goes on to tell you about the \$10,000 that Edna contributed to the Hospital Building Fund, her other munificences, the economic benefits to the community, the low rate of venereal disease afforded by having county-inspected hookers on hand. As Larry Conners puts it, "He makes that whorehouse sound like a damn non-profit county recreational facility."

Most of Big Jim's arguments are pretty specious as well. His figures on rapes, VD, pregnancies and dope (all of which he says there are none of, excepting for niggers) are all bogus, and the \$10,000 bequest about equals the annual take on the jukebox. As for the local impact, one local shopkeeper easily dismissed that: "They only got a payroll of a dozen out thar. Now how much money you figure a dozen whores're gonna spend in this town?"

All sad but true. For all Big Jim's efforts at rationalizing, the Ranch's longevity was built on sentiment rather than cash, and sentiment is a poor defense against either the law or a zealous camera. Once Channel 13 weighed in against the "bawdy houses," as they called them, there was no contest.

That doesn't mean, however, that Zindler ever proved his vague assertions about "corruption and Organized Crime." He never even proved his contention that the two whorehouses grossed over \$3 million a year; most local Ranch-watchers think that ludicrously high and the most commonly accepted figure was about \$300,000. The IRS, who never failed to collect the government's portion, never questioned Edna's returns.

All that Marvin had to do, really, was haul his cameras out to La Grange and put on the tube what every local farmboy for a hundred miles already knew.

Big Jim, who'd probably never before seen the business end of a TV camera, was mercilessly pinned in one of those Conners interviews. He erupted against those goddam DPS fellers who'd been pokin around last fall, and allowed as how he'd called DPS Chief Col. Wilson Speir to get them off his back. The Colonel, said Big Jim, told him to close down the Ranch until the elections were over with, so Big Jim obliged. It was the kind of interview that could make you wonder whose side he was really on.

After a week of nightly exposes, during which the Ranch kept whoring along with all flags flying, Marvin went up to Austin to interview the Governor, the Attorney General, and Col. Speir. Confronted simultaneously with prima faecie sin and TV cameras, they all professed outrage that this could be going on and promised to get to the bottom of things.

On Wednesday, the day before he was to go to Austin to answer a summons from the Governor, Big Jim capitulated. He just called Edna and told her to shut it down. Marvin promptly left for Jamaica on vacation. Within a week of its shuttering, the Ranch is deserted, with only Lilly still hanging around to shoo off curious interlopers. Edna is hiding out with her old man in East Texas, and the girls are in Dallas, Houston, Austin, streetwalking. Big Jim is being especially suspicious of strangers, hinting bluntly to the writer from Playboy that he's seen about all the snoopy journalists he cares to.

At Berkelbach's Cafe in Round Top, the hangers-on discuss what to do with Marvin Zindler should he ever chance to pass through town. A petition circulates in La Grange to save the ranch, and bumperstickers make their appearance, proclaiming the same thing. Local opinion, as figured by the owner of the local radio station, breaks about even. A few local tycoons begin making plans to buy the Ranch and turn it into a restaurant, with private dining rooms in each of the bedrooms.

There is, indeed, little evidence of any sort that the ranch had ended its days. It had always existed, really, as a pleasant irrelevance, kind of a collective daydream by a rural people that believed in dreams remnant from a simpler era that had a tolerant niche for such things, along with eccentric uncles and town drunks. Like all the excess baggage from that era, realized daydreams have been burrowed under by the plow of progress. X-rated movies and celluloid sex are alright in the modern age-as is everything that is malleable into legalisms and electricity-but that additional dimension of humanity that the ranch possessed is out of scene, not

immoral, just obsolete.

Marvin Zindler, Consumer Lawman

A stylish, self-proclaimed public protector battles deception in business and poor taste in fashion.

by John Durham The boss of the Harris County sheriff's consumer fraud division is a walking example of deceptive advertising. A silver-gray toupee gives the appearance of a full head of carefully styled hair. Two nose operations and a chin job have substantially altered facial features that their owner considered too Jewish. The son of a millionaire merchant and land owner, he parks his sheriff's car in bus zones because his county salary is not large enough to pay parking lot fees.

Deputy Sheriff Marvin Harold Zindler is a hard man to pin down, not only because his considerable energy keeps him moving all over the county, as well as to Austin and Washington and other power centers where consumers have managed to draw the attention of politicians, but also because his complex personality defies neat classification.

His supporters, including the seemingly endless stream of complainants who daily line the benches outside his office, would tell the world Zindler is their only hope in an apparently deaf and powerless arena of local officials. His detractors, including some of the merchants whose pocketbooks and reputations have been crimped by Zindler, maintain he is a raving ogre, verging on paranoia, totally self-seeking and an egomaniac besides.

Such polarities are inspired by a man as colorful and unpredictable as a pinball machine, a man driven to equal heights of pique and rage by a roofer defrauding a widow of her life savings or a drug store not stocking candy bars it advertised. A man who carries a pistol and handcuffs to address a Sunday afternoon meeting of old folks at the Jewish Community Center.

Since he began his consumer operation in October, 1971, Zindler has brought the weight of criminal sanctions against store owners, repairmen, pyramid club operations, building contractors and others whose disputes with customers formerly were settled in the civil courts, if at all. He has shown little favoritism in targets for his criminal charges. Defendants range from the advertising director of Foley's, Houston's largest department store, to gypsy palm readers to bookies said to be welching on bets.

His tools are existing state laws, most on the books for years but seldom used in consumer cases, and an uncanny flair for publicity. Both are equally important in his work. The criminal charges he lodges include deceptive advertising, a misdemeanor, and theft by bailee, a felony. He has lost count of the number of formal complaints filed, but they probably approach a thousand.

This record is no small accomplishment for a man crammed into a small suite of offices off a stairwell on the seventh floor of the Houston Criminal Courts Building and operating with a staff that includes one other deputy, two secretaries and an assistant district attorney assigned to screen the criminal charges.

The results of all this fire and smoke so far are hard to measure. Consumerism is necessarily plagued to a certain extent by P. T. Barnum's Law (There's a sucker born every minute): For every shady operator shut down, at least two will probably take his place and find willing customers. But at least citizens of Houston and its environs are learning that in Zindler they have an ally.

And they flock to him with continual tales of outrage, despair and woe: complainants in business suits from downtown office buildings, housewives in curlers and slippers, blacks and chicanos in worn garb. They sit on an old wooden bench, perhaps discarded from a courtroom or church sanctuary, grumbling, sharing stories of what they consider to be wrongdoing at the hands of the commercial sector.

One man says he had to pay almost twice the agreed figure to get his car back from a repair shop. "The manager just laughed at me. Maybe Mr. Zindler can help me." A young, attractive housewife contracted to have a new roof put on her house. The contractor did one day's work and never came back, even though she had already paid him half the price. She can't afford a lawyer and figures the consumer fraud division offers a way out of her jam.

They wait—as many as 80 a day—in a narrow, dark, noisy corridor. Once inside the office, the din does not noticeably subside. The phone complaints are if anything more numerous than the ones made in person. Callers are frequently greeted with, "Consumer fraud division. Can you hold, please?" Jerry-built walls provide cubicles for Zindler, the secretaries and Deputy E. L. Adams and Assistant District Attorney Neal Duval, who interview the great majority of complaints.

Zindler is out of his office as much as he is in—making speeches, arresting persons charged by his division, visiting the press room in the courthouse, filing charges in a justice of the peace office. Adams, a remarkably calm and good-humored man, grouches occasionally about Zindler's absenteeism, complaining that if the boss talked to more people, the lines wouldn't be so long. Zindler himself complains that his staff and office space aren't big enough. "They put me in an office next door to the men's room" he says.

Not all complaints, of course, result in criminal charges. Some problems are resolved over the telephone. Some persons are referred to other offices, such as the small claims courts. Filing a criminal charge does not guarantee any specific results. A lot of Zindler's charges have been tossed out by justices of the peace, who say that the matters are civil in nature or that no one was hurt by the transaction. Defendants, however, have learned they cannot rest easy after a justice of the peace dismissed the charges.

In one such case Zindler charged the owner of a car repair firm with theft by bailee after a customer complained he had been unable to get his car back from the company, even though he had offered to pay the repair bill, because the company wanted him to sign a statement that he had inspected all the parts installed in his car. He refused to sign the statement.

A justice of the peace later dismissed the case, but Duvall presented the matter to a grand jury, which indicted the owner, J. J. Enright of Texas Motor Exchange, on the theft charge. A district court jury, in what Duvall termed the first major court victory in consumer fraud cases in Houston, convicted Enright last November and gave him a five-year probated sentence.

That conviction added to Zindler's stature and respectability around the courthouse, although he shared the limelight with Duvall, who prosecuted the case. Other lawmen, attorneys and reporters who had grown accustomed to seeing Zindler's lawsuits dismissed or who had branded him as an incorrigible publicity hound were forced to revise their estimates. "You can damn sure bet he's got the attention of car repairmen now," was a common reaction to the outcome of the case, which is on appeal.

In a reversal of their usual relationship with Zindler, newsmen sought him out after Enright's conviction. He gave an uncharacteristically modest statement, saying only, "It was a victory for the people." Usually it is Zindler who is looking for reporters, and when he calls, they come running. No other law enforcement official in Houston, probably in Texas, can summon reporters and cameramen on such short notice and with such regularity.

Years spent as a photographer for the now defunct Houston Press and as the public relations director for the sheriff's office have honed his knack for spotting the unusual, comic, and —occasionally—significant story. The only common theme running through stories Zindler gives to the media is Zindler. And he knows that it's not a story unless someone is there to report it. He admits to using the media whenever possible to his own advantage. "I want the public to know I'm here to help them and I want the crooks and cheats to know I'll get them," he says.

He loves to see his name in print and his face on the six o'clock evening news. He subscribes to the theory that no story about him can be a bad story, that any mention of his name, even critically, is good. He carries at all times a list with the phone numbers of local television stations and newspapers.

Recently he alerted the TV stations that he was going to a Walgreen's drug store to arrest the manager for deceptive advertising. Zindler beat the camera crew to the store, and, instead of going ahead with his arrest, wandered around the magazine stand killing time until the newsmen arrived.

Zindler stories have an almost mystical ability to mushroom and generate other Zindler stories. Late last year he charged the sales manager of a large, Florida-based appliance store with deceptive advertising for allegedly failing to provide a customer with a raincheck guaranteed in a newspaper ad. That was the first story. After he filed the charge, Zindler called the manager and asked him to come to the courthouse. The man did, and posted a personal recognizance bond, but Zindler didn't know about it.

A couple of days later, Zindler obtained a warrant for the man's arrest and, with his usual posse of television cameramen, went to the store to pick him up. On seeing evidence that the manager had already posted bond, Zindler backed down. That was the second story.

The store and the manager retaliated by slapping Zindler with a \$35,000 lawsuit in federal court, accusing him of hurting the store's trade and slandering its integrity. That was the third story.

Marvin Zindler, Consumer Lawman

by John Durham

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Zindler, not to be outdone, generated the fourth story when, on the complaints of two customers, he filed two more charges of deceptive advertising against the store manager.

The fifth, and, at this writing, last story to come out of Zindler vs. the appliance store, occurred when Zindler and the store's general counsel called a press conference to announce that the manager had paid a fine on one of the three charges, Zindler had recommended dismissal of the other two, and the store had dropped its suit against him.

Zindler chose his office as the scene for the press conference, thereby adding considerably to its noise and turmoil level. As two TV cameramen scurried to set up their lights, and two newspaper reporters lounged against the walls, Zindler moved a bemused complainant to another chair so the man wouldn't be in the picture. Then, with lights glaring and microphones in front of him, Zindler and the store's lawyer, looking slightly embarrassed and confused, made their announcements. The whole performance was repeated a few minutes later when a third TV crew arrived. Zindler, always eager to cooperate with any newsman's request, agreed to the instant replay even though the attorney was worried about missing his plane back to Miami. Almost as an afterthought, Zindler told reporters as they were leaving, "And you can put in your stories that this is not a trade out. If they violate the law, I'll file on 'em again."

Such rebounding and multiplying stories, plus his continual concern with getting his story to the people, have led local reporters to regard Zindler with some suspicion and a little antagonism. Zindler sheds such feelings with ease. "I can't let them bother me," he says. He doesn't carry a grudge and either agrees with criticisms or turns them to his advantage.

During Enright's trial, the defense attorney attacked Zindler for his role in the case. Zindler had taken the witness stand, and, when asked what his job was, had turned toward the jury and proudly said, "I am Harris County's consumer protector." The lawyer, in his closing argument, charged, "When you pull back the curtain there is an individual who is not a consumer protector but is an assistant deputy sheriff who is apparently an egomaniac."

"Hell," Zindler said later, "I would have stipulated to that."

A visit to Zindler's comfortable, middle-class home in suburban southwest Houston provides a trip through long years devoted to collecting the printed name and picture of Marvin Zindler. Rummaging through boxes of clippings, scrapbooks of Houston Press photos, and high school and college yearbooks, Zindler details high points of his life since he was born in the home of A. B. and Udith Zindler in Houston in 1921. The elder Zindler was to make more than \$1 million in a clothing store and land dealings and become mayor of the city of Bellaire. Marvin estimates that his share of the family estate, left to him in a trust fund, is worth about \$1 million now, depending on the value of the four Zindler stores and land, in which he owns a quarter interest with his three brothers.

His 12-year-old house belies any connection with great wealth. It is roomy and tastefully furnished in Middle-American, but it is a tract house, much like one an advertising manager or car repair company owner or roofing contractor might buy. This particular evening Zindler is at home with his wife, Gertrude, Marvin Jr., one of his five children, and Marvin Jr.'s wife, Carmen. "It is a close family," Zindler says. His daughter-in-law echoes the sentiment. Even though she and Marvin Jr. have their own apartment, they visit at Zindler's "almost every day."

The family is sitting in the den, watching an old Roman gladiator movie on the color TV. Zindler has just returned from making a Sunday afternoon speech—he averages about one a day—and launches into tales about his career. The other family members listen patiently and attentively, contributing details that he leaves out. They seem to enjoy the stories of his exploits, even though they've undoubtedly heard them many times before. Toward the end of the evening, as Zindler searches diligently for a picture from an earlier time, before his facial operations, Marvin Jr. says, "Most people just walk out the front door on him when he starts going through the clippings and photographs. He's like a man with a million slides of the Colorado River."

The clippings at times do seem to be endless. He first hit the papers when he won a national twirling contest in high school. He was in the band, he says, playing the flute and piccolo because they weren't so hard to

carry as bigger instruments, when the band director told him to start learning to be a drum major. He spent a year at Tarleton State College then came home when World War II got underway, went to work buying men's clothes in his father's store, and in 1942 married Gertrude, his high school sweetheart, in the Plaza Hotel. "She was Methodist and I was Jewish, so we had to get married in a hotel."

He joined the Marines but lasted only a month before they booted him out for flat feet. "That should give you an idea how I got started being a cop." Then, "because everyone else was in the Army," a radio station whose owner knew Zindler through his father, invited him to be a disc jockey and newsman. He still has some tapes from spot newscasts. "They're really awful," his son says, chuckling. "He would ask a man who had been in a wreck, 'Does it hurt? Do you think you're gonna die?'"

The radio job led to part time work as a TV cameraman and photographer for The Houston Press when that paper was in its glory days as the scandal sheet of Houston. His pictures were nearly always of traffic accidents or crime scenes and often filled more than half a Press front page.

In 1962 he decided to get out of reporting law enforcement and become part of it. He joined the sheriff's office in January. "He should have been a lawman at 19," Gertrude says. "We'd go on a date in high school and he'd drop me off at 9:30 or 10. His mother would call at 11:30 or 12, wanting to know where Marvin was. He'd be out riding around with the Bellaire Police Department."

His early years with the sheriff's office were in the civil division, where he served and collected judgments, and on the fugitive squad where he picked up criminals arrested in other jurisdictions all around the world. He began making the papers when he collected strange judgments or unveiled a new wrinkle in transporting prisoners: He had a furrier make a pair of mink-lined handcuffs for lady prisoners. "They looked like the lady might be wearing a wrap," Zindler says. "It wasn't so embarrassing for them."

Even then he was known as "The Dapper Deputy" because of his always smart, always in-style clothes. Pictures show him in a sheriff's car, nattily dressed with a snap brim hat on his head and a box of cigars on the car seat. He has since given up the hats ("I quit wearing them when everyone else did") and the cigars ("I quit smoking them because they burned holes in my new double knit clothes and you can't get those mended.")

Zindler hasn't parted with the extensive wardrobe. If anything, it has grown. On a recent trip to New York he bought about 60 suits. He thinks he may have more than 100 altogether, counting "those in the closets, some in the cleaners and some downtown at the store." His clothes have forced his wife out of their bedroom closets. He doesn't plan to let her recoup, either. Talking with a visitor at home, Zindler says his wife gets mad at the money he spends on clothes because she doesn't get to buy any herself. Well, the visitor asks, why can't she buy some clothes? "Because I'm buying em," Zindler responds.

His concern with appearance is not limited to attire. He owns "three or four" toupees, valued at about \$300 apiece. (Last year when the attorney for an organization Zindler was trying to shut down threatened to have Zindler's scalp, the deputy carefully boxed one of the hairpieces and delivered it to the lawyer.) Zindler got the first toupee in 1954, and, he proudly says, "no one's ever seen me without it." How does he manage that? "You knock on the bathroom door," his son says, "ask if you can come in, and you hear, 'No. Get out of here, goddamn it.'"

The same year he bought the first toupee, Zindler had his chin lifted and a nose job. "The nose job wasn't right, so I had them do it again," he says. (He says he had the plastic surgery because he looked too Jewish. "Houston was more prejudiced then. It may be my imagination but right after the operation I started getting invitations to join organizations, requests to serve as an officer of clubs, things that had never happened before.")

The effort that goes into the total Zindler look includes a small makeup table in a closet. The makeup and a sunlamp give him a healthy, tanned appearance even in the middle of winter. The sunlamp sessions are not without pitfalls. About a year ago Zindler appeared at the courthouse wearing sunglasses all the time, even indoors. "I burned my eyes under the sunlamp," he explained. His favorite eyewear now is a pair of purple tinted glasses, adopted after short, unsuccessful tries at a monocle and a pince nez.

The appearance dictates some concessions in the equipment he carries to perform his role as a deputy sheriff. He has a chrome-plated, pearl-handled .45-caliber automatic pistol. It stays at home in a drawer while he carries a smaller, 9 mm gun. "The .45 doesn't look right under my coat," he grins.

Zindler wears suspenders as well as a belt, not because of an excess of caution, but to help support the extra

weight of the pistol and handcuffs he carries around his waist. He only carries the weapon and cuffs because sheriff's department policy dictates it, he says.

Marvin Zindler, Consumer Lawman

by John Durham

(page 3)

As much as Zindler relishes his reputation as a dandy, it is likely he enjoys his duties as the consumer's friend and protector even more. He brings almost unlimited energy and enthusiasm to his job. Each case, while he is working on it, becomes in his mind the most important problem he has handled, and he will spend hours trying to convince newsmen that it should be written up and shared with the public. His efforts as head of the consumer fraud division have spanned almost every conceivable area and include the trivial and zany as well as the serious. A short sampling of Zindler cases includes:

A charge of using the American flag to advertise, filed against the advertising manager of Foley's after the store ran an ad featuring a drawing of Old Glory. The manager drew a probated jail term.

Charges of deceptive advertising lodged against the managers of two Houston Walgreen's drug stores because, Zindler said, the stores did not carry a particular brand and size of candy that had been advertised. The theft case against Texas Motor Exchange's Enright.

A theft charge against a roofer who allegedly did not finish a job he contracted for.

A theft by false pretext charge against a TV repairman who allegedly did not install all the new parts he billed a customer for.

A full-dress grand jury investigation of odometer rollbacks by car dealers. Only one criminal charge, a perjury indictment against an odometer repairman, resulted from the probe, but Harris County auto dealers resolved to ask the new legislature for criminal penalties for turning back mileage indicators.

And, in one of his most bizarre cases, Zindler filed a theft by false pretext charge against a gypsy.

Zindler tells the story this way: A gypsy fortune teller, visited by a woman, told the customer her family was infested with evil spirits and, for a price, the fortune teller would get rid of the spirits. The customer came back, complaining that she was still having problems. The fortune teller replied that now she needed a refrigerator to bury the spirits in. So the unfortunate lady went to the store, bought a refrigerator, and had it delivered to the gypsy. The lady's husband came home, found the sales slip for the refrigerator and, after hearing his wife's story, complained to Zindler about the fortune teller. Zindler visited the gypsy and found the refrigerator being used to store food and drinks. He filed the theft charge. "I wouldn't have arrested them if they had buried the refrigerator," Zindler said. He later dismissed the case when the gypsy made full restitution.

As the variety of his cases suggests, Zindler does not have any master plan for cracking down on consumer fraud. The impression is more that of a man reacting to a series of phone calls and visits from the grievd customer. The phone jingles and Zindler springs into action. "I like to work on one problem or a series of related cases until we get the thing cleared up, then move on to something else." Most of the time he does not initiate any investigation or file any charge without first having a complaint from a citizen.

He is not particularly interested in obtaining a glossy string of convictions. "We don't consider going to court a success," he says. "We want the customer to get taken care of after we get in the case. If we get a bunch of convictions, that means we're not successful, we're not able to work out the problems between the merchant and the customer. That means the customer is not getting any restitution." He says he prefers to resolve a problem with a phone call.

He shares with the Federal Trade Commission a passion for bringing honesty to advertising, especially where large, established businesses are concerned. He searches both Houston papers daily for deceptive ads, and can pick them out easily because "I wrote more phony ads than any of those people when I was in the clothing business."

"Just because a man wears a suit and tie and has a store doesn't make him different from anyone else in the eyes of the law," Zindler says. "There's no reason for a big store to advertise something for sale and then not have it." Zindler feels, though, that the big boys of business are pretty clean in their dealings with customers. "They're going to be in business tomorrow. Their operation is based on tomorrow. We worry about the

merchant who seems more concerned about making a fast buck today and doesn't care about tomorrow." Zindler says some consumer problems in other parts of the country don't seem to be prevalent in Houston. "Consumer chiefs in other cities and states have told me that a lot of their complaints stem from grocery stores—overpricing, bad advertisements and the like. We get very, very few complaints on grocery stores." Zindler says he does get a lot of complaints about merchants not backing up their warranties and guarantees. "We've been pretty successful talking to these people on the phone," he says. "And as a general rule we find that a warranty is only as good as the company you buy from." He feels, though, that he or anyone else is powerless to substantially alter the number of bruised and dissatisfied consumers. "The consumer problems probably haven't changed much here since we started up. Wherever there's money and people involved, you're going to have problems."

Sometimes, however, Zindler can spot an illegal operation where higher ranking law enforcement officials have seen none. He scored what he considers to be one of his major consumer victories against Tussey & Associates Success Clubs, Inc., after Harris County District Attorney Carol Vance and Houston Police Chief Herman Short said they could find nothing illegal in the club's operation.

Zindler, after several members complained to him, initiated an investigation of Tussey, a success-motivation organization which offered seminars and lectures on self-confidence. The firm had clubs in 11 Texas cities. Estimates placed the membership as high as 8000 persons who had invested more than \$10 million. One lawyer described it as "a Dale Carnegie operation with the added lure of a quick and handsome profit." The club, operating on a chain-letter principle, sold memberships for \$150 to \$500. Members then earned \$80 to \$150 for each new member they recruited and smaller commissions when the new members in turn recruited others. Zindler persuaded a grand jury to probe the club, even though Vance at first said the firm was not violating state law and Short concurred with the district attorney's position.

The grand jury indicted several Tussey officials on charges of operating a lottery and, after subsequent actions in civil courts, Tussey closed its operations in Texas. Mark Vela, an assistant district attorney who participated in much of the Tussey litigation, credits Zindler with the initial thrust behind probes that led to indictments and court orders against the company. "Without him (Zindler), the investigation would have died somewhere along the way. Had it not been for his persistence, we would not have gotten them," Vela says. Vela admires Zindler's determination, but contributes his own story about Zindler's preoccupation with Zindler. As Vela tells it, he once left his office while Zindler was making a series of phone calls from the assistant district attorney's phone. When he returned, Zindler was gone, but he discovered that Zindler, like almost anyone else, doodles while using the phone. "Only most people draw circles or pictures or make notes," Vela said. "Marvin had filled an entire page with two words: Marvin Zindler. He wrote them in every way imaginable, in block letters, in script, big and small. It was a whole page of Marvin Zindlers."

Zindler was using Vela's office on another occasion when he announced one of his most off-beat consumer cases: Acting on a complaint that a man was not paying off on football game bets, Zindler arrested the man and charged him with possession of bookmaking paraphernalia. At that time Zindler said he didn't care what kind of complaint a consumer had; he just intended to enforce the law. "I don't care whether it's a store not delivering what it advertises, a repairman not fixing television sets, a stock fraud scheme or a gambler not paying off. I'll get 'em," he said. Meanwhile, the modly-dressed defendant sat morosely in a corner of the office, maintaining that he was in investments and did not owe anyone any money.

Such capers have earned Zindler criticism from some unlikely sources, including the Better Business Bureau of Metropolitan Houston and other lawmen. The Better Business Bureau, in a newsletter published shortly after Zindler moved into the consumer fraud area, accused him of "generalized, irresponsible public statements." Loyd Frazier, until recently the chief deputy of the Harris County sheriff's office, says he sometimes had complaints about Zindler from other deputies because Zindler seemed to like publicity too much. "I had to get on Marvin once or twice because it didn't look good for the prosecution of a case to have the TV cameras on the spot for the arrest. Then it looks like he's doing it just for the publicity." Frazier lauds Zindler as "a real good officer. When he gets something, he won't let up. He gets carried away sometimes. He seems to have an ego that, when he gets an assignment, no matter how large or small, he stays with it." Some members of the district attorney's staff, men who must prosecute the cases Zindler files, despair at Zindler's zeal, which they feel is untempered with a good working knowledge of the law. "There's no way I can make a case like that stick," is a common complaint. Zindler freely admits he is no lawyer, but he says he tries

to look up the law before he files a case. In the Tussey probe, he says, he had a gut instinct that the firm was illegal, though he didn't know what laws it was violating.

He professes not to worry about the pokes and jabs from his critics, saying he just wants to do his job and he wants that job to be in law enforcement. Before the first of the year, there was common speculation that Jack Heard, the incoming Harris County sheriff, would keep the consumer fraud division but move Zindler to a less visible position in the sheriff's operation.

As this issue went to press, Texas Monthly learned that Heard had fired Zindler. Zindler is considering running for public office.

The Real Little Whorehouse in Texas

In 1844, a bordello opened in a hotel in LaGrange, Texas. The original proprietor was a woman known as Mrs. Swine. Swine is most likely not her given surname, but a nickname given to her because of her physical resemblance to a pig - she was short, stout, had stubby arms, an upturned nose and a penchant for wearing the same soiled dress day after day. Although literature and film have led us to think of prostitutes as lovely ladies who were merely kicked around by life, this certainly wasn't the case in this instance. Mrs. Swine took in young women who were physically and mentally handicapped (with nicknames like Three-Finger Sally, One-Legged Mary, Blind Nellie, Bald Betty, etc.), and most likely couldn't have found work in any other profession but prostitution. One might have thought her a saint if not for the fact that she was, you know, turning these girls into hookers. The house of ill-repute continued to function LONG after Mrs. Swine's departure from the town in the 1860s, though records are sketchy until after the turn of the 20th century when Miss Jessie Williams arrived to set up shop in town. Miss Jessie brought some dignity to the profession, hiring attractive ladies, closing the doors of her newly-acquired digs to roustabouts, blacks and Mexicans, and welcoming politicians and lawmen with open arms. Around 1915, there was a short-lived cleanup craze in LaGrange, which found derelicts, hookers and outlaws being deported from the town -- but upstanding citizen Miss Jessie somehow wound up keeping her "boarding house" (as it was claimed in tax records).

At the start of the Great Depression, the going rate for a "date" at Miss Jessie's was \$3, but she lowered it to \$1.50. Unfortunately, disposable cash was sparse during the era, so Miss Jessie began accepting chickens in trade for sex acts. For several years, Miss Jessie and her girls survived almost solely on poultry -- and Miss Jessie was able to supplement income by selling off excess chickens and eggs -- and this led to the brothel being known by the nickname "The Chicken Ranch" (one of the few facts the film got right).

By the 1950s, the war was over, business was booming, Aggies were regularly taking full tours of the Chicken Ranch, and a 23 year old woman named Edna Milton moved to town and took job -- then eventually was made manager of the Chicken ranch when Miss Jessie began ailing with arthritis. Following Miss Jessie's death in 1961, Milton purchased the property for \$30,000 (which far exceeded the land's estimated \$8,000 value) and immediately christened it "Edna's Fashionable Ranch Boarding House." Of course, the technical name was irrelevant since the name "The Chicken Ranch" had permanently stuck. By this time, the going rate for 15 minutes with her girls ranged from \$8 for a traditional sex act to \$40 for more perverse deeds. Houston rock trio ZZ Top immortalized the brothel in their 1973 song "LaGrange," which would become one of the band's most successful (and signature) tunes. Unfortunately, this glowing endorsement of the well-known house of ill repute didn't serve to bring them any clientele -- in the months between the time the song was recorded and committed to vinyl, the Chicken Ranch was forced to close its doors.

Backtracking a year, it was business as usual when the Texas Department of Public Safety began their investigation of The Chicken Ranch in 1972. The DPS and the Texas Attorney General's office were convinced that both the Lagrange bawdy house and The Wagon Wheel in nearby Sealy, Texas, were linked to organized crime. The DPS set up surveillance outside the cathouse and were met by an angry Sheriff T.J. Flournoy and his shotgun-toting deputy, who strongly advised DPS officials to pack up and move out. Texas Attorney General John Hill and assistant Attorney General Herbert Hancock were determined to get the brothel closed down, but didn't have a means of doing it. So they decided to turn to the press to do their dirty work...

Hill and Hancock set their sites on a flashy Houston TV reporter named Marvin Zindler. Zindler's shocking exposés ("Sliiiiime in the Ice Machine!"), gaudy attire (white suits, blue tinted glasses and over-coiffed white toupees), coupled with his over the top on-air theatrics (which, yes, sometimes did include singing choruses) made him a beloved celebrity on Houston's KTRK, leading him to sign a lifetime contract with the station in 1988 (his campy segments remained a staple of KTRK's news until Zindler's death in 2007). But he'd only been a KTRK reporter for around six months when Hill turned him onto the Chicken Ranch, claiming ties to organized crime and political payoffs. This, however, was never proven, and Milton had included a passage in her "Rules and Regulations" which her girls were required to read that stated: "This place nor I have any connection what so ever with any other place mob or syndicate of any type."

That was the story the Eyewitness News team set out to uncover. Because of Zindler's egocentric showmanship, he was later made out to be the villain of the story when, in fact, he had little direct involvement. Station honchos only sent single male employees undercover to The Chicken Ranch, which excluded the married Zindler. Marvin conducted interviews with several key figures (full transcripts of all of these interviews were printed decades later in Zindler's biography "White Knight in Blue Shades"), then launched a weeklong exposé on Action News in July 1973. Despite protests and a petition started by local Sheriff T.J. Flournoy, the little whorehouse was forced to close, on August 1, so Edna and her girls migrated. People continued to flock to town until at least 1975, only made aware of the closing of The Chicken Ranch by a sign that hung on the fence outside which read: CLOSED DUE TO COMPLAINTS OF MARVIN ZINDLER.

The unusual story got some national exposure with a blurb in Time Magazine in late August, and freelance writers Larry L. King and Al Reinert flocked to the scene. Reinert's article ran in the October 1973 issue of "Texas Monthly;" King's made it to the January 1974 issue of "Playboy." Suddenly the story had international interest. Zindler returned to the scene of the crime in December 1974 to do a follow-up on how LaGrange's economy had suffered from the closing of the Chicken Ranch, and he was greeted by a hostile Sheriff Flournoy, who bombarded the reporter with expletives before shoving him to the ground (fracturing several of Marvin's ribs), ripping off his wig, grabbing the camera and yanking the film out of it. The film footage didn't survive... but the audio did and, predictably, aired on Action News. Zindler sued and eventually settled out of court for an undisclosed sum, which was donated to charity.

The Best Little Motion Picture

The real-life story of the closing of The Chicken Ranch made international headlines in 1973, and it served as the basis for the popular 1978 play *"The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas."* Naturally, Hollywood was eager to exploit the story, but problems ensued from the start. The original Broadway duo of Peter Masterson and Tommy Tune were initially hired to co-direct the film, and Larry L. King, who's credited for breaking the story and went on to author the musical, delivered his first draft of the screenplay in 1980.

Right around the same time, Dolly Parton was at the top of the world with her successful acting debut in "Nine to Five," and Burt Reynolds was enjoying a string of hits like the "Smoky and the Bandit" franchise and "The Cannonball Run." Executives quickly began courting them, but Parton was particularly apprehensive of the negative impact that the bawdy story may have had on her career, which was reaching its apex. She demanded rewrites and fought to have the directorial reigns handed over to Colin Higgins, who had made her look good in "9 to 5" and also attained success with "Foul Play" and critical acclaim for "Harold and Maude." At one point, Willie Nelson was announced for the role of Ed Earl and Barbara Mandrell as Miss Mona, but Parton and Reynolds teamed up and negotiated their contracts as a team, with estimates of Universal paying \$5-\$6 million for the pair.

Tensions mounted between King and the film's stars, who demanded rewrites to strengthen their characters. Parton, meanwhile, went to work writing a variety of songs for potential inclusion. King went on to publicly challenge Reynolds to a fistfight, and he regularly badmouthed the two stars for the rest of his life, so it's presumable that their parts were heavily altered by Higgins, who received a screenwriting credit.

Jim Nabors had gone into retirement, but he agreed to appear in the film at the behest of his old buddy, Burt Reynolds. Similarly, it was Reynolds who suggested Charles Durning for his highly lauded portrayal of the Governor, instead of Higgins' first choice, Mickey Rooney.

The set of The Chicken Ranch was erected on Universal backlot on the original site of the Bates Mansion from "Psycho," which had recently been relocated and rebuilt for the making of "Psycho II." The house has gone to appear in countless other movies, perhaps most notably as the home of the family of killers in Rob Zombie's "House of 1000 Corpses."

Parton has referred to the making of the film as "a nightmare." Not only was Parton nervous about the material, but Universal executives feared that it would be perceived that they were making smut. Studio interference was constant, rewrites were endless, and expectations were high. Workers at the Capitol in Austin were put out when they had to contend with a movie crew stealing their parking and hijacking the building. For the big finale in which Ed Earl picks up Miss Mona and carries her to the truck, Reynolds picked up Parton and suffered a hernia. As various problems arose, the film swelled over budget.

The original cut of the movie allegedly exceeded 150 minutes. The primary plot centered on a young prostitute named Shy who came to work at The Chicken Ranch, and there was a major subplot involving Ed Earl's romance with Dulcie Mae. Universal executives weren't happy with the length and found themselves wanting to eschew the stories of the "Chicken Ranch Girls," whose roles were reduced to a few lines and musical numbers. Most of the Broadway play's story was dropped in favor of the fictional love affair of Burt & Dolly's characters, and it plays like a PG-movie with a few quick T&A cutaways (that were easily masked by alternate unused footage for the TV version).

Audiences got their first glimpse of the movie in a sneak-preview trailer underscored with an original tune by Parton titled "Down at the Chicken Ranch" -- a song which was nowhere to be found when the film was finally released. Also not making the cut was the Parton-penned Burt Reynolds' ballad "Where Stallions Run" (which later surfaced in the American TV edit), and various Carol Hall songs from the stage musical. What was included was Parton's signature hit, which she wrote for former singing partner Porter Wagoner and scored a hit with in 1974. This recording was also a hit, and she had a minor hit with a '90s duet version with Vince Gill, but it was Whitney Houston's 1992 rendition which would skyrocket the song to musical immortality and pad Ms. Parton's bank account.

The movie debuted in Austin, Texas, during a two-day celebration that was chronicled in the syndicated "The Best Little Special in Texas" which featured a concert, parade and emceed dinner. Back in 1982, the word "whorehouse" was perceived as a word too naughty for some markets in middle America, so TV and print ads were sometimes censored. It' knocked Universal's own monster hit "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial" off the number one slot at the box-office and secured favorable box-office returns. Doubtlessly, it disappointed many men who'd hoped to get a glimpse at Ms. Parton nude. The movie went on to be a cash cow on home video, with the \$100 video store retail price tag quickly plummeting, and nearly continuous releases of the film being available around the world ever since in a variety of media formats.

Strangely, an unedited workprint of "The Aggie Song," which is filled with extra verses and more lockerroom antics, got leaked and was regularly played at a Chicago gay bar before eventually finding its way to the internet. Unfortunately, many of the Aggies, along with director Colin Higgins, were among those lost during the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s.

Parton and Reynolds remained friends until his dying day, and they occasionally made appearances together on TV and at Dollywood.









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DAS SCHÖNSTE FREUDENHAUS IN TEXAS

[illegible]

With Burt and Dolly
this much fun
just couldn't be legal!

A vibrant, stylized movie poster for 'The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas'. At the top, a yellow circle contains the title 'THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS' in a decorative, serif font. Below the title, Burt Reynolds, wearing a yellow Texas Sheriff's uniform and a cowboy hat, and Dolly Parton, in a black and white corset, are the central figures. They are surrounded by a lively scene of people dancing and socializing in front of a purple building with multiple windows showing various scenes of adult entertainment. A man in a dark uniform is visible on the left, and another man in a cowboy hat is on the right. The overall style is reminiscent of classic Hollywood movie posters.[illegible]

THE BEST LITTLE MCHRENTISE IN TOWN

BURT REYNOLDS DOLLY PARTON

La Cage aux Poules

<p>UNIVERSAL ROYALTY/ROST MUSIC INC. AND PUBLISHER COLIN HIGGINS "A CASE AND PROBLEM" (MUSIC BY TONY STEVENS AND LYRICS BY DONALD LEWIS) CHARLES DUFFING JIM KAUROS</p>	<p>WRITTEN BY LAUREL L. KING & PETER MASTERSON MUSIC BY COLIN HIGGINS LYRICS BY LAUREL L. KING & PETER MASTERSON PRODUCED BY CAROL HALL MUSIC PERFORMED BY DOLLY PARTON</p>	<p>PERFORMER ALBERT WILLIAMS MEMBER OF THE PENTATONE QUARTET GRIGG PAPER TONY STEVENS PRODUCED BY ROBERT BOYLE</p>	<p>ARTIST'S CREDIT ALBERT WILLIAMS MEMBER OF THE PENTATONE QUARTET WILLIAM A. HANNA, A.S.C. PETER MACGREGOR SCOTT PRODUCED BY STEPHAN PAUL PHELPS</p>	<p>PRINTED BY THOMAS L. MILLER NEWTON, MASS. "POWER & BOLD" COLIN HIGGINS 1. NEW YORK, CITY OF NEW YORK 2. NEW YORK, NEW YORK STATE</p>
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